CONTENTS

Vol. XXIX, No. 3, April, 1960

Existentialism as a Philosophy	H. M. Estall	297
Joyce Cary's Second Trilogy	Elizabeth M. Kerr	310
Schiller's *Maria Stuart*	G. W. Field	326
Commodity and Honour in *King John*	James L. Calderwood	341
Historical Causation and Human Free Will	W. H. Dray	357
Milton's Abstract Music	Albert Cook	370
The Happy Hunting Ground	T. Lennam	386

REVIEW ARTICLE

Courtiers, Writers, and Sages	Millar MacLure	398

REVIEW

Democratic Socialism	Elisabeth Wallace	402

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EXISTENTIALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY

H. M. Estall

Does existentialism exist? In 1904 William James chose to ask the question does consciousness exist? and to offer a negative answer. On the face of it, James acknowledged, his proposed position seemed absurd, though he found plenty of writers who seemed to him to be on the point of abandoning the notion of consciousness altogether; however they were not quite daring enough in their negations. (One citation is worth recalling now—1959—in the year of G. E. Moore's death: "The moment we try to fix our attention upon consciousness and to see *what*, distinctly, it is, it seems to vanish. It seems as if we had before us a mere emptiness." So G. E. Moore in 1903. One might be disposed to detect here an anticipation of Sartre. But Moore goes on at once to dispel this mere seeming: " . . . it *can* be distinguished, if we look attentively enough, and know that there is something to look for."[1]) James's point was that consciousness is not something to look for, but to look with. It is, if we may continue the one-sided visual metaphor for the moment, a looking through at. "Let me explain," he wrote, "that I mean only to deny that the word stands for an entity, but to insist most emphatically that it does stand for a function."[2]

A comparable orientation suggests itself here by way of surmounting the initial hazards of definition. Collins[3] is cautious about defining existentialism, but is prepared to identify half a dozen existentialists, to listen to what they have to say, and then to reach inductively some conclusions about recurring existentialist themes. It is perhaps a minor fault in this procedure that, of those so called, few have themselves chosen the designation and several have explicitly rejected it. A more serious fault is that the inductive procedure breaks down if the observed differences outweigh the discovered resemblances. And this is what happens. At any rate, the writers themselves are much more disposed to stress their differences than their agreements.

Vol. XXIX, No. 3, April, 1960

Kaufmann,[4] in the very act of editing an anthology of *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, tells us that existentialism is not a philosophy, but a label for several widely different revolts against traditional philosophy:

> It is not a school of thought nor reducible to any set of tenets. . . . The refusal to belong to any school of thought, the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and especially of systems, and a marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic, and remote from life—that is the heart of existentialism. [It] is a timeless sensibility that can be discerned here and there in the past; but it is only in recent times that it has hardened into a sustained protest and pre-occupation.

This is the estimate of an editor who confesses that existentialism is completely uncongenial to him, but who nonetheless puts together a very readable volume illustrative of such "existentialist" motifs as the absurdity of man's condition, "the quest for authentic existence, the scorn of the inauthentic, . . . death, and the experience of time which brings us nearer death."[5] Thus existentialism, unrecognizable as a philosophy, is yet identified thematically, as a timeless sensibility to certain features of the human situation. This procedure allows the editor a rather free hand in the selection of existentialist authors: existentialist authors dwell on certain themes; these themes have been brilliantly or movingly explored by Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Rilke, Kafka, Camus. *Ergo*, let them be counted as existentialists. Thus Dostoyevsky strikes the opening notes from underground; the finale is taken from Camus' *Myth of Sisyphus*.

Kaufmann's "timeless sensibility" in existentialist writers must itself be understood within the context of history. It generates a response conditioned by the times, whether in the form of timely protest, or, as Nietzsche put it, in thoughts ill-fitting to the times. Thus Kierkegaard's dearest enemy is Hegel. His animus against the Hegelian system is evident and explicit, and yet the method is Hegelian. Kierkegaard's "psychological experiments" would nowadays be better labelled as phenomenological studies—of conscience, of anxiety, of fear and trembling. Their form is dialectical; their model is to be found in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel had followed the odyssey of the unhappy religious consciousness from the master-slave relationship through stoicism and scepticism to an ascetic dualism. A great deal of existentialist writing can, with no more ingenuity and arbitrariness than Hegel himself was master of, be fitted into Hegel's formulae. The panorama of characterizations which unfolds in Sartre's *Roads to Freedom*, the array

of patterns of bad faith in *Being and Nothingness*, the many guises and disguises of *l'esprit de sérieux* in Simone de Beauvoir's *Ethics of Ambiguity*—these are all variations on the "cunning" and the instability of the master-slave relationship. None of these writers is merely describing. Each is giving a clinical report. Hegel too was describing, in order to diagnose and dialectically transform.

Heidegger and Sartre have, in addition to Hegel, a nearer master who is less consciously but just as really turned into an adversary. He is Husserl, the dominating figure in German philosophy since the turn of the century. In France, of course, Husserl tends to take on some Cartesian colouration, but he himself helped to bring this about through his *Cartesian Meditations*, published first in French in the early thirties. Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* first appeared in Husserl's *Jahrbuch*;[6] its explicit aim, or one of its aims, was the recovery of the existentiality which Husserl's logical and phenomenological investigations had "bracketed." Sartre's first published work likewise was an *Auseinandersetzung* with Husserl—a disavowal of Husserl's version of the trancendental ego.[7]

I shall try therefore to exhibit, for these three so-called existentialist writers, a thesis which may be put briefly as follows: Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre detect the non-existentiality of the philosophical systems of Hegel and Husserl. Their task is to disclose the concrete condition of man; what they are best at describing and diagnosing is the fallen, or unauthentic, or "other-directed" condition of man. Their conviction that men live in illusion is a curious sort of mirror-image of their conviction that first Hegel and then Husserl had "bracketed" existence. Hence there is a certain ironic aptness in the use they make of the dialectical and phenomenological methods in their clinical reports. But Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre all aim at recalling men to "existence." This "existential situation" is expressed in the Christian idiom by Kierkegaard: the individual in fear and trembling alone before God. The encounter is secularized in Heidegger: alone before death. In Sartre the encounter is not uniquely symbolized. Each man makes his own freedom, but only in and through the destruction and disowning of all rights and all values. It is, as with Heidegger, an encounter with nothingness.

II

It is scarcely to be expected that any clearly formulated or tenable philosophical position can be discovered in the writings of Kierkegaard. He himself expressly rejects any such notion. His writings are "aes-

thetic," "experimental," "lyrical," "edifying," "unscientific," "fragmentary"—to use some of the expressions he himself chooses in his titles and sub-titles. There is a slight volume of "philosophical fragments," devoted mainly to meditations on the mission of Socrates, whose irony he sought to penetrate and appropriate. There is a long, rambling, repetitious volume provokingly entitled the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. But in between, and this deliberately, there is no scientific system. There could not be, for Kierkegaard was passionately persuaded that no such body of propositions, be it never so ingeniously and dialectically developed, could even begin to fulfil the Socratic admonition to know thyself, or contain the answer to the human question what must I do to be saved? One must, so Kierkegaard believed, "go beyond Socrates" to find the answer to this question, but this "going beyond" consists in "becoming a Christian," and this is a task of subjective appropriation, not of objective exposition. Hence, incidentally, Kierkegaard's distaste for scientific inquiry: it had no bearing, no relevance, as far as his personal quest was concerned. A single quotation must suffice here by way of evidence:

> Almost everything that flourishes nowadays under the name of science (particularly natural science) is not science at all but curiosity. In the end all corruption will come from the natural sciences. Many of its admirers believe that if an examination is conducted microscopically then it is serious science. A foolish, superstitious belief in the microscope; microscopic observation only makes curiosity more absurd than ever. That a man should simply and profoundly say that he cannot understand how consciousness comes into existence is perfectly natural. But that a man should glue his eye to a microscope and stare and stare and stare—and still not be able to see how it happens—is ridiculous, and it is particularly ridiculous when it is supposed to be serious. . . .
>
> All such scientific methods become particularly dangerous and pernicious when they encroach upon the spiritual field. Plants, animals and stars may be handled in that way, but to handle the spirit of man in such a fashion is blasphemy which only weakens moral and religious passion. . . . Oh horrible sophistry, spreading microscopically and telescopically abroad in folio upon folio and which qualitatively speaking produces absolutely nothing, but certainly fools men into giving up a simple and profoundly passionate admiration and wonder of things which is the motive power of ethics. . . . The main objection, the whole objection to natural science may simply and formally be expressed thus, absolutely: it is incredible that a man who has thought infinitely about himself as a spirit could think of choosing natural science (with empirical material) as his life's work and aim.[8]

Kierkegaard sought to know, not nature and not history, but himself.

Descartes' provisional code of morals—to change himself, rather than the order of the world—is for Kierkegaard not provisional, but crucial. For Descartes this meant outward conformity to the existing order. For Kierkegaard it meant exploring in suffering and in passion the enigma and the predicament of the self. But no science could do this, for its genius lay in leaving the self out of things, reducing it to the anonymous observer or the disinterested experimenter. The ethical-religious pilgrim is passionately interested in the outcome, passionately involved in the process. Consider the contrast between the "scientific" and the "religious" routes followed by Marx and Kierkegaard, both familiar with the analysis of the social situation characterized by Hegel as the master-slave relationship. The self-alienation which Marx encounters among *bourgeois* and proletarian men and which he analyses "scientifically" in terms of the fetichism of commodities is for Kierkegaard the universal human predicament which each man must change for himself, with Divine Grace, in fear and trembling, in anguish and despair, before God.

Kierkegaard had no tact for modifying the order of the world, or even for making good in interpersonal relations. Yet he sought unceasingly to establish communication with his fellows, to entrust the "certainty of the ethico-religious" to the frail bark of words. His theory of communication, about which he achieved a measure of insight that is not invalidated by being mostly hindsight, is worth recording largely in his own words.

Today we know *these* books to be by Kierkegaard: *Either/Or*, *Fear and Trembling*, *Repetition*, *The Concept of Dread*, *Philosophical Fragments*, *Stages on Life's Way*, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, *Sickness unto Death*. But all when they first appeared were ostensibly the work of other hands, though the names chosen were always unmistakably pseudonyms: Victor the Hermit, John the Silent, Constantine Constantius, Vigilius Haufniensis (the watchman of Copenhagen), Climacus, Anti-Climacus. All the works mentioned were exercises in indirect communication on the part of one who, even if for some of them he ventured to "assume the responsibility of publication," declined to identify himself with their various authors (or with the *dramatis personae* introduced from time to time by these authors). They were all, if you will, characters he might have been, masked players acting out on life's stage rôles he might have played or wanted to play or had by now discarded. They spoke their lines without authority, as did the scribes. Dialectically skilful they might well be, experimentally erotic, even ethically serious or religiously wistful, but severally or collectively they were not "that

individual" S. K. whose signature was reserved for direct testimony. There is, says Kierkegaard, an ambiguity or duplicity about this "literature," a question as to whether the author—now that it is admitted to be throughout one author—is an aesthetic or religious writer. The duplicity is quite deliberate, it is something the author himself knows more about than anybody else. One might advance, as critic, the plausible hypothesis that at first the author was aesthetically motivated, which is to say that he moved imaginatively and poetically within the domain of feeling, but that then, in the course of years, he changed and became a religious author. Unfortunately this explanation does not fit the facts. The author himself has carefully guarded against such interpretation, has been at pains to provide in advance evidence that is fatal to the hypothesis; for simultaneously with the publication of indirect communications from scribes who lacked authority, standing as they did only and precariously in the domain of the aesthetic, there came out edifying discourses frankly, though humbly, Christian in orientation and witness, bearing unambiguously on their title-pages the name of Søren Kierkegaard. So this hypothesis must be discarded. The truth of the matter is that from first to last the author, in and through all his disguises and his masks, was and remained a religious writer, haunted always by the question what does it mean to be a Christian, and especially to be a Christian in Christendom? Nevertheless we are still without any explanation as to why a religious writer should follow so devious a path.

Let us try a different approach. Suppose, instead of trying to probe the purely personal inwardness of a poet, we consider the public for whom he writes, or more exactly his appreciation of that reading public. Here is a curious situation indeed. Here is a Christian—no, not that, for he said, "My imperfection as a Christian I myself fully recognize, but I know what Christianity is"—here rather is a witness, the members of whose audience live in Vanity Fair under the collective delusion that they are living in Christendom and are naturally, comfortably, essentially Christians.

> What does it mean that all these thousands and thousands call themselves Christians as a matter of course? These many, many men, of whom the greater part, so far as one can judge, live in categories quite foreign to Christianity. . . . People who perhaps never once enter a church, never think about God, never mention his name except in oaths! People upon whom it has never dawned that they might have any obligation to God, people who at most try to be guiltless of transgressing the criminal law, and perhaps do not even count this as quite necessary! Yet all these people . . .

are all of them Christians, are recognized as Christians by the State, are buried as Christians by the church, are certified as Christians for all eternity.[9]

This, says Kierkegaard, is roughly how the case stands. How then is one to proceed? An illusion can never be destroyed directly. Only by indirect means can it be radically shaken. If it is an illusion that all are Christians, and if there is anything to be done about it, it must be done indirectly, not by one who vociferously proclaims himself an extra-ordinary Christian (a professor extraordinarius), but by one who is ready to declare that he is not a Christian at all.

This then was Kierkegaard's chosen rôle as a writer: a religious writer, practising deception deliberately in order to meet his audience where they really were, though they might not acknowledge this. The assumption is "that the greater number of people in Christendom only imagine themselves to be Christians—actually they live in aesthetic, or at the most in aesthetic-ethical, categories." So the thing to do is patiently and gently, loving and serving the truth but not making any parade of this, begin where the reader himself is. "If you can do that, if you can find exactly the place where the other is and begin there, you may perhaps have the luck to lead him to the place where you are." Or rather to lead him to the point of confession and then shyly withdraw oneself "so as not to witness the admission which he makes to himself alone before God—that he has lived hitherto in an illusion."

III

I now turn to Heidegger and to Sartre. For them the Hegelian system has gathered dust. Natural science has grown vastly in scope. The social sciences have encroached far more upon the sphere of the spirit, claiming the while to be value-free in their presuppositions. Christianity has not quite ceased to be respectable, but it is no longer *the* form through which the unexamined life maintains itself in security and respectability. God is absent, if not dead, but still there is sensibility to the contrast between the phoney and the real. Once, writes Unamuno, it was said, "*Initium sapientiae timor Domini*. But now it is perhaps *timor mortis*, or it may be *timor vitae*. Always it comes about that the beginning of wisdom is a fear."

Heidegger does not share Kierkegaard's misgivings concerning systematic philosophic inquiry, or at any rate he did not when he wrote *Sein und Zeit*. His task is to be the investigation of fundamental

ontology, and this is to be initiated in and through existential anthropology. Man occupies a uniquely privileged position with respect to the question of Being just for the reason that it is he who asks it. Man is not merely one among many beings; for this being in his very Being, Being is at stake. Man is that being who puts Being to the question. The subject-matter of the inquiry is Being; the object to whom the question is addressed is man, the questioner; the objective is to delineate the meaning of Being. This, I suggest, is Heidegger's version of the Cartesian *cogito*. Why is there something, rather than nothing? I, who ask the question, what am I? Perhaps, as Nietzsche wrote, a question mark squeezed between two nothings. Yet the question-mark stands; it *exists*.

> The being that exists is man. Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist. Angels are, but they do not exist. God is, but he does not exist.[11]

This formulation is translated (by Kaufmann) from the latest addition to Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*, in which he was commenting on Sartre's epigrammatic sentence that existence precedes essence. His further explanation acknowledges that existence, so defined, might be construed as subjectivity, but not in the sense this term ordinarily bears; that an unwary reader might construe it as consciousness, but that this would be a mistake, for consciousness presupposes existence (this comment is presumably aimed at Sartre); and finally that one might be disposed to equate "existence" with "selfhood": "To be a self is admittedly one feature of the nature of that being which exists; but existence does not consist in being a self, nor can it be defined in such terms."[12] Heidegger himself chooses the word *Inständigkeit* as a synonym. This is a beautiful word, he says, indicating that he chooses it for the right poetic connotation—instancy, standing in the openness of Being. (It seems to me, but this of course is interpretation, that the negro spiritual conveys in simple religious language what Heidegger echoes in the wasteland where God is absent: "It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer.") Man's destiny is to be the shepherd of Being, but his beginnings and his habitual dwelling-place lie in the oblivion of Being.

Heidegger isolates as the primitive characteristic of human life the state of being-interested-in, being-concerned-about, being full of care. Being is not first of all thinking, still less thinking *in vacuo*. The environment is as early and as incontrovertibly there as that of which

it is the environment. Man is in-the-world in the sense of being caught between need and its satisfaction. Thinking and knowing are derived forms of this primitive solicitude. Man's first method of dealing with his environment is one of skilful manipulation. The category of availability (*Zuhandenes*) is prior to that of presentation (*Vorhandenes*). Functional definition comes first: "The mountain is the quarry, the river is water-power, the wind is first in the sails."[13] Everything acquires its significance and hence reveals its character in use. The first things to be defined are those which lie to hand; their definition is in terms of their handiness. A stone is a handy thing with which to lay one's dinner low: tools, weapons, houses, clothes, products of labour, spoils of the chase, and fruit of the soil—these things begin to constitute the objective world. But what, you will say, of the data of sheer visual and other sense perception? Vision is discussed here. The primary kind of *Sicht* is *Umsicht*—shrewdness, alertness, circumspection. Only that is there which is perceived? No: only that is perceived and so defined as "there" which it behooves me to see or perish. But that which is available for use may lose this character. Tools get broken, garments wear out, things once useful are so no longer. "If the salt have lost his savour wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men." In this fact of breakdown, in their resistance to the purposes of man, things announce themselves in their sheer objectivity. Obstructiveness, obtrusiveness, obstinacy—these are the marks of sheerly downright objects. Thus things as mere things are also products of care—care frustrated indeed—but their distinguishing marks are born of the labour and the pain of man. It is because of this rift between the needs of man and the environment as a need-fulfilling circumambience, because of its disappointing, indifferent, even hostile aspects, that man is led to ask whether the environment has an independent status and a significance in a sense other than that of supplying man's needs.

> The question whether indeed there be a world and whether its meaning can be elucidated is, as a question asked by one for whose Being being-in-the-world is constitutive, clearly without sense. It is not important to demonstrate the fact and the manner of an external world. What might be worth enquiring into is why man, being in the world, should incline to bury the world in epistemological negation preliminary to attempting its demonstration.[14]

A second moment is now added. Man is in the world, but he is also with others in the world. The world is always that which I share with

others; being in it means being there with others. The inference concerning another mind is indirect and precarious if one follows the route of sensationalistic empiricism. But if I am engaged in sawing wood or hauling in the nets, and another is participating with me, then the common nature of need and the joint character of our efforts towards its fulfilment yield all the knowledge of others that is required. Once again one sees Heidegger removing a major problem in the history of post-Cartesian thought by inserting as an ingredient of the basic constitution of man that which will prevent the problem from arising.

The world, then, is both instrument and community; but Heidegger's picture of it is really as sombre and gloomy as is Hobbes's account of the state of nature. The strands of the tissue of care become woefully entangled. Other persons are met in traffic with the world, but their modes of responding are most usually those of antagonism, ostracism, avoidance, indifference, or else of subjugation, exploitation, and enslavement. Men reduce others, co-partners in care, to the status of things. When a tool breaks or a weapon is blunted, a man should soberly reflect on what has hitherto been its *raison d'être*—to be of use to him. Were he to carry such reflection far enough he would discover that, amid all the variety and complexity of life, only he exists for himself. Usefulness is not a self-explanatory category. Somewhere in the long line of means to ends must occur that which is an end-in-itself, wherein Being itself is at stake. But man, the average man (*Das Man*), rarely raises this question. He prefers the muddled mediocrity of crowds, where men are confused with things. He takes refuge in public opinion. Or, sated with the satisfaction of care that comes of putting things to use, he treats his fellow-men in the same fashion, making them work for him. Men, other men, are treated as instruments of his. Or else he becomes the instrument of others; he escapes reflection on his own significance by classifying himself along with all the others as a mere thing, a unit in a meaningless conglomeration, and refusing to ask the ultimate question as to the meaning of care.

The central fact about care is that it is subject to time. Its last term is death. Premonitions of this have not been wanting. They have been given in the development of fear, the threatening aspect of the unknown, the uncertainty attaching to distance, to darkness, and, most of all, to death. The generation of fear is obscure for Heidegger, but eventually, he says, all fear crystallizes into the fear of death. In face of death the structure of care is seen in perspective. It is seen as the impulse of a life which is finite. The horizon of time bounds the being of man—not a spatial

horizon which shifts as he moves, but one which threatens and ultimately engulfs. This discernment is neither merely nor mainly intellectual. It is what Unamuno calls "agony"—tragic insight before crisis. Men can try to appease it; indeed, it is their habit to do this, by flight back to the familiar and the commonplace. Death, one counters, is of course a fact. All men are mortal, it is said, and callously each man hardens himself to the fact by making the proposition illustrate the structure of the syllogism. He thinks to escape the incidence of the end by assuring himself that it is common to all, and fails to notice, because men are dying every day, that with each death time has run its course. He constructs a common time to defeat a common death, calls it history, and neglects therewith the reality of time—its subjective individuality. It is, for Heidegger, only by seeing life in the shadow of death, openly and knowing death to be near, that freedom is found—a freedom which alone can yield the full significance of what it means to be with others in the world.

IV

Sartre's existential anthropology is by no means an echo or a translation of Heidegger's. Many of the themes recur, but they bear the stamp of a quite different experience. Heidegger's *In-der-Welt-Sein* is set in the simple countryside, Sartre's in the big city. Heidegger's primitive child of care is a shrewd peasant, a cultivator for whom the "I do" precedes the "I think." Sartre's characters are intellectuals steeped in introspection, nauseated by the plenitude of matter and the platitudes of the public. The encounter with others is not manually at the other end of a saw, but visually across the park, or while waiting on table, or under police surveillance. There is no close counterpart in *Sein und Zeit* to the extensive and ingenious elaboration in *Being and Nothingness* of the contrast between *l'être-en-soi* and *l'être-pour-soi*. Sartre is much closer to Kierkegaard than to Heidegger in his sensitivity to the nuances of mood, of self-deception, and of self-examination.

Simone de Beauvoir has said that *Being and Nothingness* is in large part a description of the serious man and his universe. This clue to a long and often tedious book is provided by one who is surely an informed and sympathetic critic. We might perhaps have come upon this clue ourselves more readily in the earlier book, *Nausea*. The most explicit passage in which "seriousness" is mocked is that in which the narrator, Antoine de Rocquentin, visits the local picture gallery in the seaport

town of Bouville, and finds there, embalmed in varnished pigment, the illusion of self-importance in which generations of town dignitaries had lived out their lives. Here were the portraits of all those who in the years between the wars of 1870 and 1914 had made up the *élite* of Bouville—the business leaders who had made it a thriving port, by extending the docks and breaking the dockers' strike. One might easily be misled into thinking that Sartre is describing and mocking the *bourgeois*. So, no doubt, in this and other passages, he is; but this interpretation would narrow the notion of *l'esprit de sérieux*, which can take many guises, even inverted ones. In the *Age of Reason* it is Jacques, the *bourgeois* brother, who points out to Mathieu, the professor, that

> you despise the bourgeois class, and yet you are a bourgeois, son and brother of a bourgeois, and you live like a bourgeois. . . . You are as good as married, you have a delightful flat, you get a competent salary at fixed intervals, you have no anxiety for the future because the State guarantees you a pension . . . and you like that sort of life—placid, orderly, the typical life of an official.[15]

Sartre's serious man, Heidegger's anonymous man, Kierkegaard's nominal Christian—all exhibit a certain family resemblance. But Sartre, more than anyone else, is obsessed with the social menace of this inner emptiness. The growing up of Lucien in *Childhood of a Leader* is exhibited in the various rôles that this sensitive, insecure youth tries on for size. Then one day, under stress, a rôle is seized. "I am Lucien; somebody who can't stand Jews." Incredibly, it works; it gives him status.

> The real Lucien—he knew now—had to be sought in the eyes of others, in the frightened obedience of Pierrette and Guigard, the hopeful waiting of all those beings who grew and ripened for him, these young apprentices who would become *his* workers, people of Férolles, great and small, of whom he would one day be the master. Lucien was almost afraid, he felt himself almost too great for himself. So many people were waiting for him, at attention; and he was and always would be this immense waiting of others.[16]

This condemnation of the unsubstantial other-directed personality has of course been dramatically expressed in *Huis Clos*: Hell is other people. "Existence" is not achieved simply through the conferring of status and the acceptance of a rôle.

One begins to discern, or at least I think I begin to discern (if this *is* existentialist anthropology) a fatal flaw. The leap of faith that for Kierkegaard is the way from the unauthentic to the authentic life involves him in the teleological suspension of the ethical. The transformation,

according to Heidegger, from the oblivion of Being to the openness of Being involves the "destruction of metaphysics." Sartre's roads to freedom lie through the dissolution first of "persons" (masks) and then of values. This no-saying to ethical principles, to the history of philosophy (tradition), and to values is a kind of philosophical brinkmanship that appears to leave no room for reason in the right ordering of human affairs.

NOTES

1 Quoted by W. James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (New York, 1938), 7.
2 In *ibid.*, 3.
3 J. Collins, *The Existentialists* (Chicago, 1952).
4 W. Kaufmann, *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York, 1956), 11–12.
5 *Ibid.*, 113–14.
6 E. Husserl, ed., *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, VIII (1927), 1–438.
7 J. P. Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego* (New York, 1957).
8 *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard: A Selection*, ed. and trans. Alexander Dru (Oxford, 1938), entries 617–19 (1846).
9 S. Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Oxford, 1939), 22–3. The whole account follows closely Kierkegaard's own statement.
10 M. de Unamuno, *The Tragic Sense of Life* (London, 1921), 107.
11 W. Kaufmann, *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, 214.
12 *Ibid.*, 215.
13 M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 70.
14 *Ibid.*, 85.
15 J. P. Sartre, *The Age of Reason* (London, 1947), 126.
16 J. P. Sartre, *Intimacy and Other Stories* (London, 1949), 232.

JOYCE CARY'S SECOND TRILOGY

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Although unfortunately Joyce Cary's *Art and Reality* makes little reference specifically to his own art, the principles he therein expresses are useful to reinforce the prefaces and the critical articles in which he explains his purpose and method in his trilogies. In analysis, this study is limited to the second trilogy: *Prisoner of Grace*, *Except the Lord*, and *Not Honour More*; the *First Trilogy*, however, is based upon the same principles, uses substantially the same method, and must equally be viewed as an artistic whole.

Cary's basic assumption about the rôle of the artist and his concept of human truth explains the form and method he devised to "express and communicate his total meaning." Since the author has "no more business in a book than a microphone on the screen," and the "truth about quality" can be conveyed only "within the realm of personality, of emotional and sensible forms," the novelist must speak through a character, presenting a world created by that character, the "world that is his work of art." The use of the first-person narrator, therefore, provides the consistent point of view necessary to lend order to experience and to transmit human truth by allowing the reader to enter the private world of the character who reveals "his own world in his own style." The author must become that character by intuition, by the "subconscious logic . . . without which no novelist should write dialogue."[1]

This approach to truth imposes severe limits in scope: since truth cannot be known as a totality to any one person, a novelist "can give only very partial truth in any one book, and that truth with an angle."[2] The trilogy was the artistic means by which Cary overcame this limitation and solved the two problems of the writer:

> to convey, in one work of art, one formal conception, a significance which is simple enough for immediate apprehension by the feelings of a reader and yet not false to the immense complication of actual life . . . to design a book in which all the characters and incidents form parts of one coherent

experience for the judgment, and at the same time to give it the vitality of a narrative from actual life.[3]

Cary's explanation of the method he chose and the effect he hoped for in the *First Trilogy* apply equally well to the second trilogy: his three chief characters in turn "give us their complete worlds":

> By this means I hoped to get not only a richer sense of life in its actual complexity, but a three-dimensional depth of characterization; qualities not to be obtained in a single book without confusion, or, what was for my purpose equally bad, conceptual analysis.[4]

Since the three novels form "one coherent experience," they comprise an artistic unit. What he says about the form of a book applies to the trilogy :

> All these separate pages and chapters, like the movements of a symphony, do not have a complete significance until the whole work is known. . . . This is only to say again that the separate forms do not possess their whole content until the work is complete. That's why I call the book a total symbol. It is both richer than its parts and actually different from them.
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> [A novel] is not apprehended simultaneously in all its elements like a picture, it builds in the memory, and it is not complete until all has been read, until it becomes a total symbol, a total meaning. Yet at once, when this total effect has been felt, not only do all the details assume a new and final relation to the whole, but we are aware of the judgments which assessed them at the time of reading.[5]

Joyce Cary's dissatisfaction with his *First Trilogy* was caused by a failure perceptible only when the work is viewed as a whole. The three worlds "were not sufficiently interlocked to give the richness and depth of actuality" that he sought. He therefore limited his second trilogy to "a single subject, politics, and tied the three chief characters closely together in the same complex development."[6] In the same Preface, Cary explained that his plans for a third trilogy on religion had to be given up because of his age and health. *The Captive and the Free* reveals, therefore, not an abandonment of his principles but Cary's valiant endeavour to convey his ultimate vision of truth before death overtook him. It is a single volume in the third person only because he heard "Time's winged chariot hurrying near."

Presenting in his second trilogy[7] three narrators whose worlds are inextricably interlocked, Cary builds up a well-articulated structure and skilfully uses technical devices to connect the three volumes and to make clear his design. The basic device, presentation of major characters from different points of view, will be dealt with in discussion of characters.

The enigmatic character of Chester Nimmo is the centre of the dramatic triangle and of the political theme. To retain the enigmatic quality with which Nimmo is invested in *Prisoner of Grace*, and perhaps because there is no easy explanation of such a leader, in *Except the Lord* Cary has Nimmo tell only that part of his story which preceded his political success. He tells about his poverty-stricken boyhood and his youthful struggles, facts that help to explain his "plain folks" appeal to the common people. His narrative reflects his sense of being a man of destiny—with the dangerous confidence in himself fostered by such a conviction—his deeply religious feeling, and his evangelical eloquence. Since his story stops forty years before the time when he writes it, Nimmo does not reveal himself as a husband and father. His devotion to his sister and his strong family feeling suggest that he would take other family relationships and responsibilities very seriously.

The story of Nimmo as husband and father has, however, been told from his wife's point of view in the first novel of the trilogy. In *Prisoner of Grace* Nina begins her story not long before she married Nimmo and, with reminiscent digressions but a dominantly forward movement, continues to the period in which Nimmo, working on his memoirs, writes *Except the Lord*, the period immediately preceding the events related by Jim Latter in *Not Honour More*. Thus the three accounts are written in chronological order but cover events in a B, A, C arrangement. The climax of all three stories, or rather of one story with three characters, is reached in *Not Honour More*. The close relationship between *Prisoner of Grace* and *Not Honour More* is indicated in the ending of the former, "Jim can only shoot me dead," and the beginning of the latter, "This is my statement, so help me God, as I hope to be hung." The story of Chester Nimmo, as the cause of Nina's situation and Jim's action, intervenes between Nina's and Jim's stories but does not deal with them.

Repetition of significant events from the past serves as a linking device between the novels. An incident in *Prisoner of Grace*, repeated in *Not Honour More*, is typical. When Nina says "the disaster came to me . . . Jim (having for once, poor boy, lost his head with me)" (p. 10), we know that the close relations and strong attachment between the cousins have reached a predictable climax. Jim, spending two pages on the same episode (pp. 10–12), says that Nina blames this happening for their difficulties; however, he does not tell, now or later, the essential facts: that Nina became pregnant and that she married Nimmo because Jim neglected his own responsibilities, being unwilling to resign from

his Hussar regiment to marry her. Although this is the most significant example of repetition of incidents from different points of view, the device marks an advance in Cary's technical skill since the *First Trilogy*. Repetition is the more notable because it must occur chiefly in the first and third novels, in which the narrators share life-long memories, but *Not Honour More* cannot plausibly deal much with the time covered in *Prisoner of Grace*.

A decided improvement over the *First Trilogy*, in which Sara's and Wilcher's narratives are well motivated but Gulley Jimson's seems lacking in plausible purpose and circumstances of writing, is the statement of a convincing purpose at the beginning of each novel which lends consistent authenticity of effect to all three first-person narratives. Nina is writing *Prisoner of Grace* to forestall and counteract unfavourable " 'revelations' . . . soon to appear about that great man who was once my husband, attacking his character, and my own." At his sister's grave Chester Nimmo resolves to tell the story of his family life, especially of his sister, "to honour the dead, and in the conviction that my story throws light upon the crisis that so fearfully shakes our whole civilization." In *Not Honour More*, Jim, as quoted above, is dictating a statement the night before his execution.

The further parallel motivation is rare if not unique in sequence novels: both Nina and Jim Latter are writing to answer charges against themselves and Nina to answer charges against Chester Nimmo. Although Nimmo does not write *Except the Lord* ostensibly to defend himself against specific charges, he does answer three major ones to regain the favour which he has lost in the religious groups. He denies that he wanted to become an actor; the play which made him aware of the "power that could be achieved by anyone with the will and a voice, anyone capable of learning this art of stringing words together in poetic form and striking the right attitudes" (p. 95) was the only one he saw until thirty years later. He denies that he spoke as a demagogue to buy votes in advocating social legislation but maintains, and quotes as evidence a letter to Nina at the time, that he "spoke as a Christian and a Protestant," believing that "it is only in family life that the freedom and dignity of a responsible citizen accords with his religious duty" (p. 100). Finally, he denies that his career was "a disaster and a fraud" and reaffirms his liberal creed (pp. 263–5):

> I do not repent of the liberalism which inspired that great government in which I served, I do not stand in a sheet, much less a winding sheet, for our creed—for tolerance, for freedom, for private rights, yea, even for private

property—tolerance which is room to learn, freedom which is room to grow, private rights and private property which are the only defence against public wrong and public breach of trust.

Nina, in *Prisoner of Grace*, answers charges against the political action of Chester in specific instances, against herself and her family as agents of Chester's corruption, and against Chester as responsible for the failure and suicide of Tom Nimmo. Jim, in *Not Honour More*, answers charges against his public actions, that in performing his duties as special police during a strike he was militaristic and endangered the nation by disobeying orders through personal spite against Nimmo, and against his private conduct, that his cranky, suspicious nature was a cause of domestic friction.

All three novels also begin with references to major characters. Nina mentions "that great man who was once my husband" and continues in the third paragraph with an account of her cousin, Jim Latter. Chester Nimmo mentions the three noblest women he has ever known, "my mother, my sister, and my wife." Jim states his name, his status, and his residence, and lists the members of his household: "wife and one child; also a visitor, Lord Nimmo." Since all three novels centre on Nimmo, with Jim prominent in Nina's story and Nina in Jim's, recurrence of major characters is a basic unifying device. Although the scope of Nimmo's narrative and the different social classes involved make it impossible for Nina and Jim to figure prominently in *Except the Lord*, minor characters such as Edward Gould and Nina's and Jim's Aunt Latter are involved in the action. Nimmo's glowing tributes to Nina somewhat compensate for her small rôle in *Except the Lord*.

The scenes in which characters appear and reappear and events are acted and re-enacted serve as another unifying device. Palm Cottage is as essential to the story of Nina, Jim, and Nimmo as Wuthering Heights was to that of Heathcliff, Cathy, and Edgar. In *Prisoner of Grace*, Palm Cottage is the childhood home of Nina and Jim, the scene of their early love. Ironically, at the end of their story, Palm Cottage is the scene of the deadly triangle in which Nina is caught between Nimmo, their guest, and Jim, her husband. Equally freighted with dramatic irony is Palm Cottage in *Except the Lord*: there Nimmo first saw Nina as a child of five, and there he wrote his tribute to Nina, the woman who determined his destiny and his country's—while his presence was creating the triangle which killed them all. Jim's statement begins with his giving Palm Cottage as his residence; it is also the scene, we learn, of Nina's and Nimmo's deaths.

Recurrent themes are the most effective and most consistently maintained device for unifying the trilogy. The three titles represent major themes. Nina is a "prisoner of grace" in that she is bound to Nimmo by her appreciation of his god-given gifts as a leader and accepts her wifely duty as a patriotic duty. Despite her lack of love for Nimmo, she is deeply aware of a spiritual bond which she cannot break, even after she has married Jim. The fatal situation at the end of *Prisoner of Grace* is due to Nina's still being a "prisoner," though experiencing the happiness of a grand passion with Jim: "It is because that happiness is so precious to me I dare not turn Chester out. For I should know that I was committing a mean crime against something bigger than love." (P. 301.)

Except the Lord recounts the story of Chester's struggle against poverty, his loss of belief in his family's fervent religion and his adoption of Marxism as a faith, and his disillusionment in Marxist leaders of labour unions. Through the selfless love of his family, especially his sister, he experienced a conversion which was the basis of his faith as a lay preacher and later as a Protestant political leader, convinced that "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is lost that build it." It was years, he said (p. 273), before he grasped the full significance of that truth:

> not only for the man but for all his endeavours—not only in his family life but in his political activity . . . unless he aim at the life of the soul then all his achievement will be a gaol or a mad-house, self-hatred, corruption and despair.

The drama of his conversion convinced Nimmo that he was chosen by the Grace of God to be a Christian leader, and his phenomenal success strengthened that conviction. When the Liberals went down in defeat after World War I and society reached the state of corruption described by Nina, Nimmo tried to regain power in order to serve his country again in "the crisis of civilization." *Except the Lord* is an appeal to the religious common people who had been his first supporters.

Jim Latter's chief point of agreement with Nimmo, except in loving Nina, is concern for the state of the country, but he sees Nimmo and his "gang" as the destroyers of all truth and honour in the country, in marriage, and in families. The only hope that he sees is in the unselfish loyalty of such "little" men as Varney and Maufe. *Not Honour More*, as well as presenting Jim's justification for killing Nina and Nimmo, represents his whole mental cast—"truth," "honour," "home," "country," and "justice" are constantly on his lips as he dictates, and he is as

convinced that he alone has the truth as Nimmo is convinced that he has the Grace of God. Jim's concepts are those of a gentleman in army and colonial service; he follows a traditional code of a stratified society.

These same abstractions also have thematic significance in the other two books, but both Nina and Nimmo admit their errors and recognize the possibility that those who disagree with them may be right according to their lights. Chapter XIV, in *Not Honour More*, is the most important single passage on truth. Jim tells how Nimmo attempted to make him face the truth. Nimmo admitted that, in his love for Nina, he had wronged Jim and he pleaded with Jim to yield to Nina's wishes and to forgive and forget, starting again in "the truth of mutual sympathy, the reality of affection." Nina, the chief sufferer, Nimmo exonerated and praised, and young Jim, in his cruelty to Nina in the past, he excused on the grounds of youth. He recalled his past kindness to Jim, completely confirmed in Nina's story, and pleaded with him not to put personal "honour" above duty to his country: "The country is tottering on the edge of revolution and you seize this moment to gratify a private spite." But since Jim regarded Nimmo and his gang as greedy and self-seeking, he refused to accept Nimmo's "truth." The significant point, however, in Jim's concern for truth is not his political differences with Nimmo (since from Jim's point of view unfavourable constructions could easily be put on Nimmo's career) but the fact that Jim never admits he is the father of the two children brought up as Nimmo's and to whom Nimmo has been a devoted father. Nimmo referred so delicately to the fact of Jim's paternity of Tom that Jim in his statement could construe Nimmo's reference so as to minimize his own guilt and conceal the consequences: "I was a bloody young brute who took advantage of a girl because I knew she was good and true—because I knew she wouldn't give me away." From Nina's account, however, it is clear that Jim knew that after he "took advantage" of her Nina was pregnant (p. 10) and that her hasty marriage to Nimmo was due largely to that fact. We know also that a similar incident occurred, with similar results, when Jim was Nimmo's guest (chap. XXIX). Jim's devotion to the truth is thus more completely hypocritical than Nimmo's evasions, because Jim completely shirked the responsibilities that the truth should have placed upon him and refused to see that his offence against Nimmo in the second instance was precisely what he threatened to shoot Nimmo for at Palm Cottage. Nina did not get a divorce before Sally was born because she was still a "prisoner of grace," unable to ruin Nimmo's career. Again, Jim did nothing about the situation; he was out

of the army but was in debt and without means to provide for her. The truth and honour Jim professed were not apparent in his abuse of Nimmo's hospitality and in his failure to live up to his moral obligations.

Although all three novels, including that narrated by Nimmo, develop the theme of the corruption of society and government, Jim considered Nimmo part of that corruption. He accused Nimmo of hypocrisy in saying that Georgina "brought him back to God and a true idea of freedom which was to know good and willingly to do it." (P. 23.) Jim, however, sounds exactly the same notes as Nimmo does. In his hand-out after his first attempt on Nimmo's life, Jim summed up the evils in the state of the nation (p. 31):

> the destruction of family life, and the policy of shameless jobbery and double-dealing in high places, only for personal ambition. . . . And family life which is the life-blood of an honourable sound-hearted nation mocked at as too much trouble and going down every day.

If the idiom were Chester Nimmo's, the statement could have been his. Indeed, Nimmo had demonstrated more regard for family life than Jim ever had. Nimmo and Jim differ in their means more than in their ends: as Andrew Wright points out, Nimmo believes in "the necessity of political manœuvre" and Jim "favours shooting to maintain his ideal of justice"; Nina is caught in the tension between irreconcilable positions.[8] This major theme may be called the public theme, as contrasted with the previous ones concerned with private codes, but the career of Nimmo makes the two really inseparable.

The structure and style of the three novels vary according to the writer's character, his purpose, and his circumstances. Cary's extraordinary gifts in the creation of character here bring his technique of first-person narrative to its height. Nina's purpose being to counteract unfavourable publicity, she gives a straight chronological account, for the most part, of her life and Nimmo's, answering charges when recounting the event or phase of their lives which provoked the charge. Although there are the usual digressions typical of reminiscences, the most notable exception to chronological order in presenting events of Nina's life with Nimmo comes near the end of *Prisoner of Grace*, when Nimmo is working on his memoirs with Nina. In the presence of others, and with characteristic cleverness, he manages to remind her of intimate incidents in their lives which would awaken her feeling for him. An allusion to a drive in a cab makes her remember an incident in which Nimmo used "the joy of the Lord" to refer to their sexual relationship and in which,

despite the circumstances, he was carried away by his passion. Having reminded Nina of the incident, Nimmo's own memory revives his ardour, and his secretary, Bootham, sees Nimmo and Nina in compromising circumstances which Nimmo tries to brazen out. Jim is bound eventually to witness such circumstances, as he does in *Not Honour More.*

Nina is disarmingly frank about herself, admits that she is unstable and pleasure-loving, that she will do anything for peace. She denies that she demands the finery Nimmo provides but concedes that she enjoys it. She even admits that, like her son Tom, she became a bit lax in her principles and drifted into a kind of moral no man's land in the friends and amusements they shared after World War I. She is fair to others and consistently denies that Nimmo was a hypocrite, saying that unless he was sincere he could not " 'put himself over' with effect" (p. 170). She notes, however, that Nimmo could make himself believe what he wanted to (p. 166).(Wright describes him as "a pitiable figure by the very profoundness of his self-deception."[9])

Nina's style is fluent and temperate, with little affectation and much feeling. She uses few definitely literary touches, although an occasional figurative analogy is drawn from her own experience, as when she explains how she swung round with the tide in her moral attitudes (p. 252). Her style is that of a sensitive, intelligent person accustomed to using her charm to sway others but not being deliberately untruthful. Neither Nimmo nor Jim shows Nina as essentially different from Nina as she reveals herself. Nimmo's idealization of her puts her in a more favourable light: he credits her with stronger principles than she has and does not see that she sometimes preserves peace at the cost of principle. There is no evidence that she was guilty of faults she did not admit. She is frank about herself and generous towards others.

Nimmo, in paying tribute to his sister and his God-fearing parents, is trying to regain the support of labour and the religious groups in the lower classes in order to avert what he considers to be a crisis in civilization. His story also is mainly chronological, but it is told with a heightening of effect gained by stressing his poverty, struggles, and spiritual crises. He devotes forty pages to the fair which was the great adventure of his childhood, and at which, through seeing a play, he discovered the power of the spoken word (pp. 57–97). So great had been the respect of his parents for the truth that theatrical performances were considered wrong, as dealing in falsehood, and Nimmo justified his attendance by the fact that the melodrama in question was based

on a real event. "Any kind of pretence, any kind of conduct having the least tincture of hypocrisy was not only a sin but a deadly trap. How often had I been told that the lie corrupts and poisons the very soul?" (P. 82.) Both thought and style are typical, and their appeal to certain groups of voters need cast no doubt on his sincerity.

In his account of his own family and of Nina, Nimmo is idealistic to the extent of seeing in them qualities that the undiscerning and unsympathetic person would not observe. He is generous towards others to the point of modifying, in reminiscence, the harsher judgment made in the bitterness of his youthful struggle for survival.

The structure of his narrative follows the familiar and popular pattern of the drama of the soul: loss of faith after two disappointments in the Second Coming of Christ, substitution of belief in the brotherhood of man as preached by disciples of such people as Proudhon and Bakunin, followed by a period of Marxian socialism and activity as a union leader. After enjoying the power of his position, he was disillusioned by the lies and violence he had become involved in and was the victim of. His final conversion was due to his dying sister's faith in him:

> She was consoling me and it broke my heart—I felt then an indescribable shock of anguish and of exultation. And instantly among the turmoil of my senses a darkness fell away, great presences were revealed, things absolutely known and never again to be obscured, grief that I knew for love, love that I knew for life, joy that I knew for the joy of the Lord. [P. 274.]

Such a drama, told in these terms, with the skill of oratorical style contrasted with blunt and graphic pictures of the life and suffering of the poor, with religious and political motives finally joined in his liberal creed, had a telling effect upon those with whom Nimmo identified himself. Nina's view of him is basically confirmed: this man would have to satisfy his conscience that the expedient course was also the right course. He well exemplifies Cary's belief that men live by their feelings and desires more than by reason, and that the demagogue's power issues from and appeals to this quality of human nature.[10] Such a man would also be able to sway the emotions of a woman who felt the force of his own faith in himself and his destiny.

One would expect Jim Latter, making his last statement before execution, with nothing to gain by deception except a more creditable posthumous record, to tell the plain truth, to be more concerned with the state of his own soul than with the errors of others. He is motivated, he says, by concern for truth, political justice, and personal honour, and by a

desire to set the record straight on events in the strike, as the act of a gentleman with a sense of *noblesse oblige* towards Maufe, who obeyed his orders and was convicted of undue severity in so doing. He speaks with approval and sympathy of a few people: Sally, his unacknowledged daughter; Sergeant Varney, who had served under him in Africa and who, because of his gratitude and sense of social class, is "the best of England"; Maufe, who fractured the skull of the Communist agitator in trying to arrest him. Towards people in power he is at best critical, at worst violently condemnatory. Towards Nina he is ambivalent, but probably honestly so: he criticizes her for loving pleasure and for using her charm for political purposes, for being as "tricky as a set of Japanese boxes," for mixing loyalty and lies. But like Othello, he loves her even when he kills her: "Because of the rottenness. Because of the corruption. Because all loyalty was a laugh and there was no more trust." (P. 305.)

Much of Jim's statement is in this telegraphic style. He describes Nina in an impressionistic view of Nimmo and his followers (pp. 18–19):

> My wife up by window talking to three young Bolshy toughs as if greatest privilege of her life. Asking after conditions in their homes. Making big eyes in sympathy. Shaking head in deep grief. . . . Putting out all her chest.

Jim's satire is sometimes vivid and original in phrasing. Nimmo's lady followers were "sizzling in the dream of his glory like apple fritters" (p. 21). Nimmo, asking Jim to take over the special police (p. 119), "pulled out another stop. This was the one he used for funerals, deep grief combined with hope. A bit of wobble underneath and a touch of angel's wing in the wind." His description (p. 139) of how Nimmo could influence Nina is true enough: "Nimmo could play on her like a piano. On her cleverness and her pride. Even her bad opinion of herself. Building her up as a noble free soul and knocking her down again as a light woman."

Jim's statement includes not only purely factual reporting, such as extracts from the counsel's examination of Nina as a witness in the Maufe case and an outlined statement of the position of strikers and other groups on May 10, but also documents submitted to court, such as Jim's letter to Nimmo about an understanding between Nimmo and the Communist leader and personal letters from Nina. The range in style and the devices for authenticity, plus the spontaneous effect of a document dictated at high speed and "not put into good style for publi-

cation" should make Jim's version of the situation between him and Nina and Nimmo and of their characters and motives the most convincing.

The subtle relation between private morals and political corruption is fully established only in the last novel of the trilogy. Here the fusion of the private and public stories suggests comparison with the Tennysonian moral of the *Idylls of the King*, except that Nimmo is more guilty than Arthur. The tragic drama begins with the marriage of Nimmo and Nina, which was based upon a lie or at least upon a refusal to admit the truth. The marriage took place because Jim, whom Nina loved, was not willing to give up his army career to accept his responsibility to Nina. Nina acknowledged the fact repeatedly, admitting also her later infidelity to Nimmo, of which Sally was the result. Nimmo occasionally admitted the fact, notably when he stated his whole position in a "life . . . eaten hollow with falseness" (*Prisoner of Grace*, 249). (There is no reason to question Nina's account.) Nevertheless Nimmo fulfilled his duties as father to Nina's children. Jim never even hints at the truth in his own statement, though Nina quotes him as saying, when she had spoken of Tom and Sally as her children, "Whose children?" (p. 240) and gives other evidence that he is aware of their paternity. Thus Jim conceals his basic responsibility for the tragedy and makes us doubt the veracity of all parts of his statement which cannot be checked against the other stories. Jim's inability to see and present the truth is explained by Cary's account of people who "live by the maxim, the slogan. . . . They are people who have lost all contact with reality, who live in a fantastic world, and sooner or later they run headfirst into reality and it breaks them."[11] Jim justifies his murder of Nina by Lovelace's code and maxim, originally applied in quite another context: "I could not love thee, dear, so much / Loved I not honour more."

Though Nimmo did use a kind of moral coercion to "play upon Nina like a piano," there was real love on his side and real need of her, and on Nina's side genuine concern and sympathy for him. Jim says harsher things of Nina than she says of Nimmo, though she never really loved him. The basic fact about the relation between Nimmo's marriage and his political career is explained by Nina (p. 296):

> all Chester's feelings and energies seemed to run into each other; his religion stirred up his politics and his politics stirred up his religion, and both of them stirred up his affections and his imagination, and his imagination kept everything else in a perpetual turmoil.

The railway episode, which Cary said was written first as "an experience fundamental" to the whole book's meaning, and which could be convincing only in Nina's own words,[12] shows how strong was the power of Nimmo's grace to hold her prisoner when she was resolved to go to Jim, whose child, she learned later, she had just conceived (chaps. XXXI–XXXIII). "Torn between two wills," Nina did not take the train to Buckfield, to Jim, but went to Aunt Latter and eventually back to Nimmo, thus preventing a scandal disastrous to Nimmo's political career.

When he thought that his career was over, Nimmo magnanimously proposed a divorce so that Nina could marry Jim, but his need for her was roused when he returned to politics to try to save the nation from disaster. With the excuse that he needed to use Nina's letters and consult with her in writing his memoirs, he established himself at Palm Cottage, neither Nina nor Jim being strong enough to prevent or put an end to the explosive situation which could lead only to bloodshed.

Even as a husband Jim failed Nina. He could not take control of the situation partly because he could not cope with his personal and financial responsibilities. Nina's inheritance from Aunt Latter was inadequate to solve their financial problems, and Jim's failure to assume financial responsibility allowed Nimmo to step in and not only invest Nina's money for her but also give her money and jewelry that Jim knew nothing about. Jim was virtually a kept man.

Nimmo's presence at Palm Cottage created a situation similar to that when Jim was his guest. Nimmo took advantage of his opportunities as Jim had done—except that it was Nimmo's generosity and trust, not his weakness, that had given Jim the opportunity. Since Nina could not have become Jim's wife if Nimmo had not been generous, Jim owed Nimmo a debt of gratitude; Nimmo owed Jim nothing. However unjustifiable Nimmo's actions, Jim was not the person to cast the first stone—or fire the first shot.

When Jim first surprised Nimmo and Nina and tried to kill Nimmo, Nimmo refused to press charges. By allowing Nimmo to cover up the facts, Jim condoned them. When he was later reconciled to Nina, he deliberately did so again. Lacking Nimmo's cleverness, Jim's only weapon would have been the genuine devotion to truth and honour which he professed but did not demonstrate. In the conflict between them, Jim had nothing to throw into the balance against Nimmo's public service. Nimmo's sense of being a divinely chosen leader thus gave him a moral advantage.

Consequently Jim was scarcely the blameless and injured husband but was instead reaping his own wild oats, suffering a kind of poetic justice. When he finally did avenge his honour, he was motivated partly by his political defeat in a battle of wits in which Nimmo as usual adopted a policy of expediency and made a deal with the Communist leader. Nina was actively involved as an intermediary and allowed injustice to be done by "forgetting" the evidence of a witness in favour of Maufe. Immediately after hearing that Maufe had been sentenced, Jim found Nimmo at Palm Cottage, with various ingenious but unconvincing reasons for his presence. By causing Nimmo's inglorious death from a heart attack in a lavatory and by killing Nina, Jim silenced them. We have only Jim's version of events from the first of May to the end of June.

Against this tangle of passions and motives in private life, the reiterated affirmations of ideals of truth, honour, and justice are ironic. Similarly ironic are the laments of Jim and Nimmo over political corruption. Nimmo undoubtedly made a deal with the Communist leader, in accordance with his policy of using compromise instead of force; letters from Nina and Nimmo corroborate Jim's account. Although both Nimmo and Jim claimed to be Liberals, both display a totalitarian tinge. Jim's mental patterns and ideas seem to give some justification for the charges of Fascism that were hurled against him; although he professed disapproval of Fascism, he did not recognize it in his friend Brightman. But Nimmo also had come to identify himself with the upper classes, rather than with the people, and his policy of expediency to regain control has a Machiavellian touch. Joyce Cary pronounced his own verdict: "Dishonesty in any form corrupts, and . . . a double standard of morality in politics can never serve 'as a valid motive or excuse in political action.' "[13] Neither man is the unsullied defender of truth and honour he claims to be. Both show evidence of the very corruption they deplore, a corruption that goes deeper than manners and social customs and seeks to establish love and spiritual bonds on deceit and betrayal.

The total meaning of the trilogy depends upon what the reader perceives to be the truth. The reader must perform the "highly active and complex creative act"[14] of reading, made more complex by the trilogy form and the narrator method. He must weigh the evidence and check each story against the others to arrive at a concept of each character synthesized from all three accounts, with the distortions removed: he must achieve a stereoscopic focus. Since essentially the private story is

subordinated to the political story, the marriage of Nina and Nimmo continuing only because of Nimmo's career, the basic problem is whether Nimmo was self-deceived, whether he did truly devote himself to the best interests of the country as he saw them, whether he was sincere though often mistaken, or whether Jim was right in saying that Nimmo was a faker and hypocrite. In reading *Prisoner of Grace* and *Except the Lord* one tends to give Nimmo credit at least for sound principles and sincere concern for the welfare of the working classes. Although Nina can justify herself only if Nimmo was a great leader, she is so frank about herself that her estimate of Nimmo seems to be equally honest. She seems incapable of gross self-deception or concealment. In view of Nimmo's constant idealization of Nina and his generosity towards Jim, even to the extent of divorcing Nina so that she could marry Jim, and in view of Jim's ambivalent attitude towards Nina and his consistent blackening of the character of a dead man whose friendship he had accepted and pretended to return, Jim seems to be the real villain. He was dishonest in private and public financial affairs and considered only his gambling debts to be debts of honour; he deliberately falsified and withheld vital truths; he seduced and deserted Nina; he evaded his responsibilities before and after marriage; he lacked courage to stand up to Nimmo when he should have or to give Nina the support she needed; he kept his eyes closed to avoid having to deal with a situation he feared to discover. Nina's account proves that he knew what was going on (pp. 287, 292, 301). Jim seems to be both the source of corruption and the destroyer of what he created.

Since it was Cary's conviction that "all novels are concerned from first to last with morality" and that "the novelist addresses his meaning finally to the moral judgment,"[15] the total meaning of the trilogy seems to be, on the plane of private life, that respect without love or love without respect leads to violation of integrity and to corruption and that to build on deceit is to build on sand; on the plane of public life, that sacrifice of private integrity in the name of public welfare is but one aspect of the corrupting effect of power. The basic reality, to Cary, is "human nature, incessantly striving towards a personal achievement in a world which is essentially free and personal."[16] His second trilogy gives us "people who are free moral agents deciding their own actions in a world of incessant vicissitude, a world as far as possible removed from the consistency of a machine, a world in which every moral problem is itself unique. . . ."[17] But this world is morally consistent in that moral error committed by free moral agents brings disastrous consequences: not only the murderer but the murdered ones are guilty.

The strong central action, the double action—private and political—completely integrated in the third novel, and the dramatic suspense make Joyce Cary's second trilogy distinctive in sustained interest and structural excellence, in contrasting moods and tempo, and in creation of complex characters. Joyce Cary achieved success in creating a world which reflects but does not preach what he believes:

> What I believe . . . is what Nimmo believes, that wangle is inevitable in the modern state, that is to say, there is no choice between persuading people and shooting them. But it was not my job to state a thesis in a novel, my business was to show individual minds in action and the kind of world they produce and the political and aesthetic and moral problems of such a world. In short (in the trilogy) the political situation as I conceive it in *my* world of the creative free individual.[18]

NOTES

1 The quotations in this paragraph are taken from the following works by Joyce Cary: *Art and Reality* (New York, 1958), 17; "The Way a Novel Gets Written," *Harper's*, CC (Feb. 1950), 89; *Art and Reality*, 16; *ibid.*, 72; "On the Function of the Novelist," *New York Times Book Review* (Oct. 30, 1949), 1; Preface, *First Trilogy* (New York, 1958), x; *Art and Reality*, 126–7.

2 Cary, *Art and Reality*, 115–16.

3 Cary, "The Way a Novel Gets Written," 89–90.

4 Cary, Preface, *First Trilogy*, x.

5 Cary, *Art and Reality*, 103, 121.

6 Cary, Preface, *First Trilogy*, xiv.

7 Cary, *Prisoner of Grace* (1952), *Except the Lord* (1953), *Not Honour More* (1955). All references are to the Harper & Brothers edition.

8 Andrew Wright, *Joyce Cary: A Preface to His Works* (New York, 1959), 141–2.

9 *Ibid.*, 148.

10 Cary, *Art and Reality*, 22–5.

11 *Ibid.*, 155

12 *Ibid.*, 97–8, 100.

13 Letter of Dec. 3, 1956, quoted in Elizabeth R. Bettman, "Joyce Cary and Political Morality," *Antioch Review*, XVII (Summer 1957), 272.

14 Cary, *Art and Reality*, 120.

15 *Ibid.*, 149, 150.

16 *Ibid.*, 155–6.

17 *Ibid.*, 157.

18 Letter, quoted in Wright, *Joyce Cary*, 154.

SCHILLER'S *MARIA STUART*

G. W. Field

In 1959, his bicentenary year, Schiller attracted most attention outside Germany through his play *Maria Stuart*, which recently, according to Benno von Wiese, "in Paris was a greater success than any play by a living German dramatist could have been." In New York, Tyrone Guthrie produced a new prose version[1] which was featured in the 1959 Vancouver Festival and has since been touring the continent. In two major respects the Guthrie adaptation diverges from the original intention. First, the two queens are humanized—even sentimentalized: for instance, in Elizabeth's affectionate dependence on Leicester and in Mary's fear of facing the scaffold. Secondly, the historical element is emphasized, suggesting that the producer saw this work in the tradition of Shakespeare's historical plays. Both these emphases tend to obscure the deeper philosophical meaning. Only in a superficial sense is *Maria Stuart* an historical play, for Schiller used historical material freely to clothe his ideas. Familiarity with Elizabethan history may even be an obstacle to appreciation. As Tonnelat said of Schiller's *Maid of Orleans*: "A Frenchman will always have some difficulty in enjoying Schiller's drama, if he does not begin by admitting that the heroine has received the name Joan of Arc only by accident and that we have to do in fact with a purely imaginary being."[2] Although Elizabeth and Maria are not "purely imaginary beings" to the same degree as Schiller's Joan, the more glaring deviations from historical fact—the youthfulness of both queens,[3] the meeting between them, Elizabeth's character—may irk us, whereas a German audience can readily accept Schiller's history—the more so since he held the Chair of History at Jena. But Schiller is quite frank about the rôle of history for him as poet and philosopher:

> Poetic truth does not consist in the fact that something really happened, but in the fact that it could happen, that is to say in the inner possibility of the thing. . . . The circumstance, that these personages really lived and that these events really ensued, can to be sure often increase our pleasure, but

with a foreign admixture which is more apt to be disadvantageous to the poetic impression.[4]

Schiller's philosophical ideas underlie his portrayal of character and plot and motivate his conscious deviations from history. By analysing his thinking as revealed in this drama, I am not suggesting that the thought alone can justify the play's existence. As a work of art and not a didactic treatise, the ideological content is legitimate only as long as the ideas are merely implicit and not explicit. In this respect *Maria Stuart* may be considered the most homogeneous of Schiller's classical or verse plays. Here history, character, and plot merge with basic philosophic concepts to form a more harmonious whole than is the case in the other later dramas. Such flaws as it has arise chiefly from an excess of zeal in Schiller for the ideas he embodied in the work and this also justifies our analytical and philosophical approach.

We have here another variation on the Schillerian theme of man's struggle to attain moral freedom despite the blows of fate in the guise of physical causality, that is, we have another version of the conflict between *Pflicht* (duty) and *Neigung* (inclination), for to Schiller (and to Kant) *Pflicht* represents the requirement of the moral law in the realm of freedom while *Neigung* represents determination by natural forces. The "personality" (*die Person*) of Mary is violated by physical force—her captivity and impending execution. Her initial reaction to this impingement of external forces is to try to meet force with force. For such a realistic recourse her resources are hopelessly inadequate, and as long as she pursues it she becomes ever more hopelessly bound up in the chain of physical causality. Thus her hopes pinned upon Mortimer, the interview with Elizabeth, and her physical attraction of Leicester —all these in turn serve only to enmesh Maria more deeply in the chain of events leading inexorably to her physical death.

The denouement of the inner action on the psychological-philosophic plane comes with her abandonment of this "realistic" course and the embracing of the "ideal" mode, namely the freely willed acceptance of physical annihilation. This process is clearly outlined in Schiller's theoretical writings. In his essay "On the Sublime" he considers man's position in the universe and finds that he is destined for freedom. The urge to freedom postulates the capacity to attain it, that is, to ward off the impingements of physical causality. But man's situation is such that his urge or destiny to moral freedom is constantly thwarted by his physical inferiority. When certain critics assert that Schiller's later

tragedies are not tragedies at all since the protagonists meet an apotheosis rather than destruction, the refutation in a partial sense may be seen in the tragic impossibility of fulfilling man's highest destiny (moral freedom) in the here and now so that this fulfilment must be projected onto an ideal plane or postponed to another world. Schiller continues:

> This is man's predicament. Surrounded by innumerable forces, all of which are superior to him and tyrannize over him, he makes the claim inherent in his nature as a human being to suffer no violence. By his reason, to be sure, he artificially multiplies his natural powers and up to a certain point he actually succeeds in mastering everything physical on the plane of physics. The proverb says: "For everything there is a remedy, save for death." But this single exception, if it really is one in the strictest sense, would negate the whole concept of man. Never can man be the creature of free will if there is even one case where he *has* to do what he does not *will*.
>
> This one awful fate forced upon him against his will thus will accompany him like a ghost and will expose him to the blind anxieties of imagination, as is actually the case with the majority of human beings, for man's famed freedom is futile if it is limited even in a single aspect. The aim of culture and civilization is to liberate man and enable him to fulfil his whole human destiny. . . .
>
> This is possible in two ways. Either *realistically* when man opposes force with force, i.e. when he controls the physical world of nature as a physical being, or *idealistically* when he steps out of the physical sphere and thus obliterates the concept of force with respect to himself. . . .
>
> If therefore he can no longer oppose physical force with a proportionate physical force, to avoid submission to it he has no other recourse but to delete a situation which is so deleterious to him and to wipe out the concept of a force that he has to undergo in fact. This means submit to it by free choice.

In a later passage Schiller makes his meaning even more explicit:

> Situations can arise, in which fate overcomes all the external structures on which he based his security and in which he has no other recourse but to take refuge in the holy freedom of the spiritual realm—in which there is no other means to still the life-instinct but to will its extinction—and no other means of resisting physical force than by anticipating it and by a full renunciation of all sensual interest morally departing this world even before a physical force accomplishes this.

This is the path trodden by Maria Stuart—"to take refuge in the holy freedom of the spiritual realm." She herself declares she is on the way "to become a blessed spirit,/Whom earthly inclinations tempt no more" (" . . . ein sel'ger Geist zu werden,/Den keine ird'sche Neigung mehr versucht"). Leicester, looking after her as she passes on her way to the block, declares: "She passes on her way—a spirit now transfigured" ("Sie geht dahin, ein schon verklärter Geist").

Before she attains this state of transfiguration, however, she is enveloped in all the toils of the *Sinnenwelt*—the physical world of the senses—for one of Schiller's key ideas insists upon the necessity of passing through doubt and guilt before attaining the Ideal. This is embraced in his concept of the threefold course of human development: from the naïve innocence of "pure nature" through the frustrations and divisions of civilization to a conscious restoration of harmony.

As the play opens Paulet describes Maria before we see her:

> As long as she still gazes on her vanity's reflection
> She will not cease to hope and dare.
>
> (So lang' sie noch ihr eitles Bild beschaut,
> Hört sie nicht auf, zu hoffen und zu wagen.)

As he exhorts her to conclude her peace with Heaven, Maria replies:

> I hope for Heaven's grace, Sir Paulet, and hope
> For stringent justice from my earthly judges.
>
> (Ich hoff' auf seine Gnade, Sir—und hoffe
> Auf strenges Recht von meinen ird'schen Richtern.)

At this stage it is evident that Maria is still holding fast to her temporal claims, trying to resist physical force with physical means, although in this sphere she is impotent against the opposing might.

At the very beginning of the dramatic action Maria reveals her preoccupation with the past murder of her second husband, Lord Darnley, and she admits her complicity:

> In anger rises Darnley's bloody shade
> From out the dark grave's vault and he
> Will never make his peace with me until
> My cup of woe is filled unto the brim.
>
> (Es ist der blut'ge Schatten König Darnleys,
> Der zürnend aus dem Gruftgewölbe steigt,
> Und er wird nimmer Friede mit mir machen,
> Bis meines Unglücks Mass erfüllet ist.)

Kennedy attempts to assuage Maria's sense of guilt, claiming Bothwell had roused her passion by magic potions and devilish arts (*Zaubertränke* and *Höllenkünste*), but Maria interrupts to protest her responsibility: "He had no arts except his manhood and my own infirmity" ("Seine Künste waren keine andre/Als seine Männerkraft und meine Schwachheit"). From this clear revelation of Maria's past guilt and passion-swayed character, the exposition moves on to Mortimer with

his wild plans for rescue *à force majeure*. Although unsanguine of effective help from Mortimer's conspiracy, she is building up hope of winning physical freedom at the hands of Elizabeth herself and she is aiming to achieve this by evoking or re-evoking the passion of love in Lord Leicester. In Schiller's scheme of ideas it is indeed ironic that Maria should plan for freedom through the medium of the *Stofftrieb* (sensuous instinct) which can only chain mankind more firmly to physical causality.

In the following scene Burleigh arrives to announce officially the imminent execution. Maria uses the occasion to unfold her legal brief: her immunity from the laws of England; the incompetence of any court to try her save one composed of her peers, that is sovereigns; the untenable evidence of her bribed secretaries; and her innocence of the crime of which she is accused. Schiller has achieved the closest interpenetration of psychological and philosophic levels. We have witnessed the tenacity with which Maria clings to, and fights for, temporal justice. She admits her impotence before the force aligned against her but is still seeking to oppose it in the same terms.

Act II furthers the development on the philosophic level—that is towards Maria's freely willed renunciation of the physical world. It is a negative development, however, in that it completes the exposition of the political and psychological forces which finally render Maria's temporal situation impossible. When Schiller wrote to Goethe on July 30, 1799, "I am now in the second act with my royal hypocrite," he gave an unmistakable clue. To argue as a recent critic has done[5] that "hypocrisy" in the eighteenth century lacked the unsavoury flavour which later accrued to the term seems to me of little relevance, for Schiller's intention concerning Elizabeth's character is unequivocal. Still less tenable is the quibble of an otherwise astute critic[6] to the effect that the sentence in the letter leaves uncertain whether the "royal hypocrite" is Maria or Elizabeth. The fact that Maria does not appear in Act II would seem to make the reference obvious.

In view of the passions of rivalry, jealousy, and vengeance which motivate Elizabeth and in view of a hinted laxity of morals, such hypocritical outpourings as the following have the spice of irony: "O kings and queens are merely slaves of office, . . . My maidenhood I must relinquish for my people." Elizabeth later shows that far from being duty's slave, she is ruled by irate jealousy of the sensuous pleasures formerly enjoyed by Maria: "Indulged she has in everything and drained/The cup of earthly pleasures."

Through flattery and his attraction for her, Leicester at the end of the Act obtains Elizabeth's assent to a casual meeting with Maria in the park at Fotheringay. Leicester's motive in furthering this is one of the weaker links in the external plot. As Thomas Mann pointed out: "It was not Schiller's *forte* to motivate carefully." We are required to see in him an element of passion combined implausibly with purely egotistical motives—to keep the pastures green on both sides of the political fence. Schiller has used, not very effectively, the historical fact that at the beginning of Mary's reign in Scotland Elizabeth had proposed the Earl of Leicester as her husband—to the discomfort of the proposed bridegroom who saw in this the machinations of his enemies.

It has been observed that the formal symmetry of this play is reflected in the fact that Maria and Elizabeth are each surrounded by three intimate advisers and that each member of the triumvirate represents a different facet of his queen. Leicester's devious plotting to further his egotistical aims assumes chief interest perhaps from this interpretation as a reflection of one part of Elizabeth's psyche.

Burleigh on the other hand represents the coldly practical realist in Elizabeth and is clearly modelled on the celebrated typology in Schiller's essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry." He has his finger upon the uncertain pulse of the nation, in which the reformed church has, as yet, hardly had time to consolidate itself, and he is aware of the potential enemies abroad who would be quick to take advantage of any internal dissension. For these practical considerations, unmoved by loftier moral arguments, he seeks Maria's death. All this is part of the historical reality of the play's setting, and yet I think Professor Mainland is mistaken in constructing upon such elements the thesis that the play's deeper meaning is in the conflict between two opposing modes of life—the traditional and experimental:

> If we allow this conception to dominate for a time our reflexions upon the play, I think we may see . . . its historical meaning revealing itself as dramatic treatment of an age of vast change in religious and political life.
>
> In Maria herself is tradition. . . . Ranged against Maria, in contrast and in real conflict, are Mortimer, Leicester, Burleigh and Elizabeth. These are the experimentalists.[7]

Apart from upsetting the formal symmetry and ranging Mortimer on Elizabeth's side instead of Maria's, this seems to me to give a misleading interpretation to what is, as E. L. Stahl has emphasized,[8] a typical Schiller drama of guilt and redemption for which the political and historical realities provide only the external setting.

The third member of Elizabeth's *entourage*, Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, may be said to symbolize the moral potential inherent, according to Kant and Schiller, in every human being, even in Elizabeth. Shrewsbury's rôle, however, extends beyond this function of illuminating one part of Elizabeth's inner being. He suggests Schiller's study of Greek tragedy at this time and may be said to be the Tiresias of the piece who voices the warning of Nemesis and foretells the tragic outcome. He is aptly described as "der alte Mann, den am Grabesrande kein irdisch Hoffen mehr verführen kann," and his vision, *sub specie aeternitatis*, transcends the here and now. Lurking beneath this Grecian mask however is the face of Schiller the moralist in one of his more Kantian moods:

> You must then find some other way than this
> To save your kingdom, for the sentence passed
> Of death against the Stuart is unjust.
>
> (Nun dann, so wirst du auf ein ander Mittel sinnen,
> Dies Reich zu retten—denn die Hinrichtung
> Der Stuart ist ein ungerechtes Mittel.)

The uncompromising formulation seems a clear reflection of the Kantian Categorical Imperative: a human being must always be treated as an end, never as a means. In the following lines he affirms, in the spirit of Schiller (and of Kant), that the moral law is absolute, universal, and eternal:

> The proof of justice lies not in the voice
> Of numbers; England's not the world, nor is
> Thy parliament the focus which collects
> The vast opinion of the human race.
>
> (Nicht Stimmenmehrheit ist des Rechtes Probe,
> England ist nicht die Welt, dein Parlament
> Nicht der Verein der menschlichen Geschlechter.)

Shrewsbury goes on to unmask Elizabeth's hypocritical pose, insisting on the Kantian doctrine of free will and individual moral responsibility:

> Say not, you must give way to stern compulsion:
> The pressure of the people; ev'ry moment
> You can possess the freedom of your will. . . .
> Yourself must pass the sentence, you alone.
>
> (Sag' nicht, du müssest der Notwendigkeit
> Gehorchen und dem Dringen deines Volkes,
> Sobald du willst, in jedem Augenblick
> Kannst du erproben, dass dein Wille frei ist. . . .
> Du selbst musst richten, du allein.)

If thus far Shrewsbury's moral stand has been rigorously Kantian, he now voices Schiller's divergence from Kant and by his appeal to the heart suggests the moral harmony of Schiller's *schöne Seele*:

> But hear the gracious dictates of thy heart.
> God hath not planted rigour in the frame
> Of woman; . . .
>
> (Der eignen Milde folge du getrost.
> Nicht Strenge legte Gott ins weiche Herz
> Des Weibes; . . .)

Yet Schiller, with his sure feeling for the theatre, injects a note of dramatic irony by letting Shrewsbury conclude his plea in the key least likely to move Elizabeth: woman's weakness and praise of Maria's physical charms. The idealist in Schiller loves to linger on the exalted plane of Shrewsbury's moralizing but the realist and the psychologist is well aware of the petty jealousies and prejudices which motivate so much human behaviour. Even the paragon of virtue, Shrewsbury, is fallible in failing to foresee the practical effect of words intended to evoke sympathy for Maria. He thus plays into the hands of his rival, the unscrupulous Leicester, who deprecates Maria's beauty in comparison with that of Elizabeth and titillates the latter's curiosity by the possibility of a confrontation that will convince Elizabeth of her own superior pulchritude.

Left alone with Mortimer, Elizabeth—in superb dramatic irony—invites her own would-be assassin to become the murderer of her adversary: "Could you waken me some morn with the news Maria Stuart breathed last night her last. . . ." In almost every aspect of the Mortimer figure the critic is obliged to admit that Schiller's hand has erred, for Elizabeth goes on to intimate that Mortimer's reward will be "the closest bonds, the dearest," and this jars as being both implausible and unworthy of the Queen of England.

Near the end of the long second act comes the weakest scene in the play: that in which Mortimer and Leicester confront one another. We feel the futility of these champions of Maria: Leicester is far too cautious and selfish, while Mortimer will "alles mit heftig blindem Ungestüm zerstören." Schiller has striven to motivate Leicester's behaviour. Leicester sees his personal downfall in Elizabeth's impending marriage with the French prince. Then his eye turned "towards the hope of former days once more; then Mary's image within me was renewed." Despite all this the characters and motives of Leicester and Mortimer put some strain on our credulity.

Act III opens with Maria and Kennedy enjoying the freedom of the park at Fotheringay. In lyrical elegiac stanzas Maria recalls her youth:

> Let me enjoy this freedom so rare,
> Let me once more feel childhood's charm,
> And on the green and in the fresh air
> Tread with my foot now free from harm.
>
> (Lass mich der neuen Freiheit geniessen,
> Lass mich ein Kind sein, sei es mit!
> Und auf dem grünen Teppich der Wiesen
> Prüfen den leichten geflügelten Schritt.)

These lyrical lines have evoked criticism. Ludwig Tieck declared, "Where one expects action, one is deluged with words and lyrical effusions, beautiful in themselves but out of place." Otto Ludwig wrote, "This passage is nothing but a song. It was a basic characteristic of Schiller and of Goethe to impose something pompous, opera-like upon the drama: the resonance of the verse was their main concern." Such criticisms take no account of the function of elegiac poetry as expounded in Schiller's essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry":

> The aim [of the elegiac mode] is everywhere to represent man in the state of innocence, i.e. in a condition of harmony and peace within and without. . . . The mourning for lost joys, for the vanished golden age, youth, love, etc., can be the material for elegiac poetry, only if those conditions of sensuous peace can be pictured at the same time as objects of moral harmony.

Consciously or unconsciously Schiller has introduced this concept into his dramatic practice, where elegiac memories of lost innocence are a prelude to moral renaissance.[9]

In *Maria Stuart* the intention is the same but Maria's moral regeneration is not immediate, for she has to undergo, and succumb to, one further moral test—the interview with Elizabeth. This climactic scene has inspired most divergent interpretations. Benno von Wiese, who has written four times on the subject in the last twenty-one years,[10] sees Maria in this scene "elevated to the pinnacle of human dignity." He continues, "She raises herself to the highest freedom of Germanic Idealism." Now listen to the passionate fury and hatred in the words Maria hurls into Elizabeth's teeth:

> A bastard soils,
> Profanes the English throne! The gen'rous Britons
> Are cheated by a cunning evil swindler.
> If right prevailed, you now would in the dust
> Before me lie, for I'm your rightful monarch.

Such language cannot possibly flow from Schiller's "sublime dignity" or

moral-aesthetic harmony. Admittedly, the scene may be regarded from many points of view: as the quarrel of political and religious antagonists, or as the personal rivalry of two women for one man, Leicester, who witnesses their strife. But Benno von Wiese clearly intends a philosophic or ethical interpretation, and it seems to me that he has failed entirely to take into account the antithetic symmetry and irony which pervade this work. Externally Maria wins a victory over the discountenanced Elizabeth—a victory hollow and ironic even on the plane of politics, for it makes her execution doubly inevitable. What is apparently a victory is really a defeat, for it marks Maria's failure at this stage to achieve moral freedom and shows her still prey to passions.

The remainder of Act III is devoted to Mortimer's part in the double intrigue. This too fits into the deeper ethical interpretation for it shows that the path to freedom does not lie through power and passion. Mortimer, now bereft of what reason he had, professes his intention of carrying off Maria from one enslavement (in prison) to another bondage (Mortimer's lust). Maria has to cry for deliverance from her would-be rescuer. She is ensnared more relentlessly than ever in the chain of physical causality. The possibility of her achieving moral freedom lies elsewhere.

In Act IV Burleigh uses the attempt on the Queen's life to press for the execution of the death sentence. The French ambassador had been implicated and his mission is now dismissed: the first step in Elizabeth's political and moral isolation. Hoping to incite Leicester to act, Mortimer tells him that his letter to Maria is in Burleigh's hands. Leicester sees a chance to repair his shaky fences by sacrificing Mortimer, but before the summoned guard can arrest him the latter commits suicide. Burleigh has impressed upon the Queen the guilt of Leicester but Leicester now forces an entry and convinces her on the evidence of Mortimer's arrest and suicide that he had encouraged the plotters only out of loyalty to Elizabeth. The Queen is won over but she decrees that Leicester and Burleigh shall be joint witnesses of the execution.

Shrewsbury, whose ancient hand had just fended off the assassin's dagger, again urges moderation, arguing that Maria living is less dangerous than Maria martyred, and then Elizabeth is left alone with her conscience. Her long soliloquy becomes meaningful only if we are conscious of its dynamic structure. The crescendo of passion gradually smothers both the moral and political rationalizations with which the speech begins, until Elizabeth exclaims: "Were she no more on earth, I should be free as mountain air" ("Ist *sie* aus den Lebendigen getilgt,/

Frei bin ich, wie die Luft auf den Gebirgen"). The irony is implicit, for Elizabeth's action will, on the contrary, deprive her of freedom (in the highest sense) and confer it upon Maria. In a paroxysm of fury Elizabeth concludes, "To you I am a bastard am I? Viper! I am so only while you live and breathe" ("Ein Bastard bin ich dir?—Unglückliche!/ Ich bin es nur, so lang' du lebst und atmest"). She signs the death-warrant and in the next scene, with cowardly dissimulation, leaves secretary Davison in a torment of uncertainty as to what he is to do with the signed document. Burleigh enters and relieves Davison of his uncertainty by relieving him of the document. In Burleigh's hands this, we know, seals Maria's earthly fate.

In the opening lines of Act V we learn from Kennedy of Maria's achievement of moral freedom. Maria had spent the night trembling, not at the prospect of death, but at the thought of "rescue" at the hands of crazed Mortimer. Towards morning a commotion is taken to herald the rescuers, but instead it is the carpenters come to erect the execution block. Melvil, horror-struck, asks how Maria endured this sudden revulsion of fortune. Kennedy emphasizes the instantaneous aspect of her renunciation of temporal claims:

> Not by degrees can we relinquish life;
> Quick, sudden, in the twinkling of an eye
> The separation must be made, the change
> From temporal to eternal life. . . .
>
> (Man löst sich nicht allmählich von dem Leben!
> Mit *einem* Mal, schnell, augenblicklich muss
> Der Tausch geschehen zwischen Zeitlichem
> Und Ewigem. . . .)

Thus Maria exemplifies the sublime as treated in Schiller's essay "Ueber das Erhabene," in which he stresses the absence of transition in the attainment of moral freedom:

> Not gradually (for there is no transition from slavery to freedom) but suddenly and through a shock the independent spirit is torn away from the net with which refined sensuality embraced it and which binds the more firmly the more transparently it is woven. . . . Often a single sublime emotion is enough to sever this tissue of deception, to restore to the captive spirit all its resilience and to impart a revelation of its true destiny and dignity [*Würde*].

Maria has won a sublime victory in this sudden moral conflict and emerges on the plane of the Ideal as a "beautiful soul." In her subsequent appearances she displays the symbolic attributes of "grace" (*Anmut*) and "dignity" (*Würde*). Hannah Kennedy describes how she

received the announcement of her immediate execution: "No sign of pallid fear dishonoured her; No word of mourning or complaint . . ." ("Kein Merkmal bleicher Furcht, kein Wort der Klage/Entehrte meine Königin . . ."). This is sublime "dignity" in the repression of all instinct to rebel and stands in marked contrast to her conduct in Act I, scene 7, in which she made a vehement protest to Burleigh.

Sublimity or "dignity," however, is not the highest manifestation of the Ideal, but rather "grace." As Schiller puts it, "In a beautiful soul senses and reason, duty and inclination, harmonize, and 'grace' is the outward manifestation." This is the heart of the philosophic argument of the play, and in her remaining appearances we perceive Maria's apotheosis as she displays in action that "grace" which is the outer or aesthetic attribute of her inner or moral harmony.

I dwell upon the meaning of these external attributes or symbols because we are too prone to fall into the error of seeing in this behaviour only the stiff formality with which the Victorians endowed royalty (and which contrasts with the commonplace, unintellectual domesticity which we try to foist upon our rulers today). No such attitude to royalty moved Schiller to depart here from the free display of emotion of his models the Greeks. Nor was it the unruffled formality of the neoclassic French theatre[11] which influenced him, but, rather, his own philosophic concepts which he embodied in these aesthetic symbols.

Maria, then, unmindful of her own predicament, sympathizes with her gaoler, Paulet, in his loss of nephew and heir in Mortimer: " 'Twas then her tears began to flow, 'twas not her own but others' woe which wrung them from her." In marked contrast to the behaviour of her small circle, whose members, according to the stage direction, "give expression to the most violent grief," Maria moves gracefully among them, the epitome of inner harmony:

MARIA

(with quiet dignity, looking round the whole circle)

Why these complaints? Why weep ye? Ye should rather
Rejoice with me, that now at length the end
Of my long woe approaches; that my shackles
Fall off, my prison opens, and my soul
Delighted mounts on seraph's wings, and seeks
The land of everlasting liberty.

MARIA

(mit ruhiger Hoheit im ganzen Kreise herumsehend)

Was klagt ihr? Warum weint ihr? Freuen solltet
Ihr euch mit mir, dass meiner Leiden Ziel

Nun endlich naht, dass meine Bande fallen,
Mein Kerker aufgeht und die frohe Seele sich
Auf Engelsflügeln schwingt zur ew'gen Freiheit.

The Eucharist scene symbolizes Maria's complete severance of earthly ties and her attainment of the Ideal: "The last of earthly bonds is torn asunder" ("Zerrissen ist das letzte ird'sche Band"). Schiller regarded the scene as vital and resisted the effort made by the Duke of Weimar to expunge it from the stage version as offensive to religious sensibilities. In her confession Maria displays "grace" as she describes frankly those sins which the dramatist has taken pains to present to us: "envious hatred" (*neid'scher Hass*), "thoughts of vengeance" (*Rachgedanken*), "sinful love" (*sünd'ge Liebe*). We see now why Schiller, for ideological reasons, had to have a youthful Maria and also a relatively youthful Elizabeth. Both had to be of an age when the life-instinct (*Naturtrieb*) would be strongest and when its renunciation would be most difficult—and most sublime. In this portrayal of the victory of "duty" over "inclination," of redemption out of guilt, both protagonist and antagonist had to be of an age when the sensual element would be most insistent, thereby focusing in sharper relief the contrast between Maria, who overcomes the world of the flesh to achieve peace of soul, and Elizabeth who remains chained to the physical world.

Schiller was overly insistent upon demonstrating Maria's innocence of the crime for which she is to be executed. There is a discordant note in Melvil's probing of her conscience in the fashion of an inquisitor. The moralist here has infringed upon the artist, but the flaw is a minor one in this play compared to the Parricida scene in *William Tell*. In both scenes Schiller overreached himself to make manifest the relative purity of his protagonist. In view of Schiller's willingness to jeopardize the artistic integrity of his work for the sake of emphasizing Maria's innocence in the Babington plot, I cannot agree with the following comment of Mainland: "It seems to me to be a precarious defence of the drama of Maria Stuart to insist that she is innocent of the charges brought against her by the English court. In some strictly technical sense she may be, but this becomes irrelevant and shallow in the ultimate working out of the theme."[12] I would say it is neither irrelevant nor shallow but the core of Maria's dramatic destiny as she answers Melvil, her father-confessor:

God suffers me in mercy to atone,
By undeserved death, my youth's transgressions.

(Gott würdigt mich, durch diesen unverdienten Tod
Die frühe schwere Blutschuld abzubüssen.)

Although the Darnley-Bothwell affair lies far back in time, Maria's involvement in it had precipitated her into a chain of causality from which she is only now freed through her frank confession of this earlier guilt and her freely willed acceptance of her present fate in atonement.

Thus Maria meets her earthly fate—"a spirit now transfigured" ("ein schon verklärter Geist")—and Schiller reveals his supreme sense of theatre in the indirect portrayal of Maria's decapitation mirrored step by step in Leicester as he stands, hands to ears, above the execution chamber. On its first performance in Stuttgart in 1803 the Duke of Württemberg was so emotionally shattered by this scene that he ordered its excision from subsequent performances—an ironic tribute from the successor of the tyrannical Duke Karl Eugen, whose interference in Schiller's early life started him on his poetic career with the revolutionary tragedy *Die Räuber*, subtitled *In Tyrannos*.

Some of the stage versions end with this powerful scene but Schiller added a swift succession of short scenes showing Elizabeth losing all that she hoped to gain by Maria's death. We see her growing isolation: the French mission and courtship withdrawn, Leicester in flight to France, Shrewsbury turning from her in aversion, and her gnawing fear the fickle populace will blame her for the act she claimed it forced upon her. One historical motive which Schiller did not use would add to the irony of Elizabeth's fate and the human pathos of Mary's, namely Elizabeth's destiny to be succeeded by Mary's son James.

It is sometimes claimed such endings show Schiller's unrealistic idealism in ensuring the triumph of virtue and punishment of vice. Although there is some substance in the claim, Schiller was by no means so starry-eyed an idealist as to see a moral order of this sort prevailing in the *real* world. Rather his aesthetic doctrine proclaimed that art is truer than history or reality and that the mission of art is to show what human destiny can and should be. Commenting on Maria's sublime attainment of the Ideal, Buchwald declares: "One would misunderstand Schiller if one believed this inner peace to be bound up with complete detachment from life. Maria regains her inner peace and at the same time that superiority over all earthly fate which for Schiller himself was the great inward achievement of his maturity."[13]

As literature and as drama, *Maria Stuart* may have to stand or fall on its merits as a portrayal of men and especially women, with their fevers and foibles, and the history they create, but the work at least gains another dimension in the ideas these persons and actions symbolize. Schiller is pre-eminently a writer of ideas and this makes him in a sense modern and contemporary. It was no doubt this affinity which impelled

Thomas Mann to make Schiller the subject of one of his earliest works and of his last work.[14]

Maria Stuart, like Schiller's other plays, requires only deeper understanding to be seen in its fullest artistic and human light. To a critic of the recent Vancouver Festival, who wondered whether Schiller's two hundredth birthday were sufficient justification for reviving *Maria Stuart*, I would reply that the play is "classical" in the best sense, in that it deals with basic human problems that transcend time and place. In our age of anxiety with its threat of nuclear annihilation, who will not agree that Maria's sublime demonstration of man's moral superiority over his physical fate retains a pertinent meaning for us?

NOTES

1 Jean Stock Goldstone and John Reich, *Mary Stuart: Derived from Friedrich Schiller's Maria Stuart* (New York, 1959). Without mentioning Mellish the authors appear to have had more recourse to his version than to Schiller's. In 1958 at Edinburgh, Peter Wood produced for the Old Vic a new verse translation by Stephen Spender: *Schiller's Mary Stuart* (London, 1959).

2 E. Tonnelat, *Schiller* (Paris, n.d.), 149–50.

3 Cf. Schiller's letter of June 22, 1800, to Iffland: "Maria ist in dem Stück etwa 25 und Elisabeth höchstens 30 Jahre alt."

4 From the essay "Ueber das Pathetische." The passage reflects the Kant-Schiller aesthetic doctrine emphasizing disinterestedness. (All translations mine.)

5 W. F. Mainland, *Schiller and the Changing Past* (London, 1957), 63.

6 Reinhart Buchwald, *Schiller* (neue Ausgabe, Wiesbaden, 1954), II, 412.

7 Mainland, *Schiller*, 67.

8 E. L. Stahl, *Friedrich Schiller's Drama: Theory and Practice* (Oxford, 1954), 106–15.

9 Cf. *Wallensteins Tod*, 3542ff., 3654ff.; *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, 2862ff., 2898ff., 2933ff.; *Die Braut von Messina*, 997ff., 2562ff.; *Wilhelm Tell*, 2569ff.

10 *Die Dramen Schillers* (Leipzig, 1938), 96–7; *Die deutsche Tragödie von Lessing bis Hebbel* (Hamburg, 1948), I, 295–6; *Schillers Werke*, Nationalausgabe, IX, ed. Benno von Wiese & Liselotte Blumenthal (Weimar, 1948), 332–4; *Schiller* (Stuttgart, 1959), 714–18.

11 Cf. W. Witte, *Schiller* (Oxford, 1949), 169: " . . . *Maria Stuart* . . . of all his plays . . . the one most closely akin, in spirit and in technique, to the *tragédie classique*. It is not surprising to find Mme. de Staël singling it out, as "de toutes les tragédies allemandes, la plus pathétique et la mieux conçue."

12 Mainland, *Schiller*, 82.

13 Buchwald, *Schiller*, II, 409.

14 Thomas Mann, *Schwere Stunde* and *Versuch über Schiller*.

COMMODITY AND HONOUR IN *KING JOHN*

James L. Calderwood

Most critics of *King John*, even since the advent of the now no longer new criticism, have given their attention chiefly to the source problems of the play, especially to the relationship between *King John* and *The Troublesome Raigne*. As one result Shakespeare's play as a work of art in its own right has largely been ignored. The sporadic vigour of its verse and the vitality of the Bastard have often been remarked—the Bastard's Commodity speech is usually cited as a conspicuous example of both—but not so much for what they accomplish in the play as for what they tell us about Shakespeare's maturing dramatic powers, that is, for what light they cast before and after, but not on, the play in which they appear. Although the Commodity speech is indeed central to *King John*, it serves as more than an isolated instance of Shakespeare's progress from ceremonious rhetoric to a more lean and trenchant utterance: it not only underscores the principle of Commodity as one of the prevailing forces in men's lives, but by the extremity of its statement it also suggests the ethical imbalance which runs through the play. The view I am proposing is that *King John* represents a dramatic crucible in which Shakespeare explores and tests two antagonistic ethical principles, Commodity and Honour. The opposition between Commodity, or scheming self-interest, and Honour, loyalty in general but in its highest form loyalty to the good of England, comprises a basic theme to which almost every action and character of the play is vitally related. In its political implications the theme explores the qualities demanded of the kingly character; in its general pervasiveness and in its specific application to John and the Bastard, it imparts to the play a unity of structure generally denied it.[1]

Both elements of this theme are conspicuous early in Act I when the Bastard is offered a choice between personal gain—the land now declared legally his—and the honour of being acknowledged Cœur-de-lion's son. In accepting the latter, however, the Bastard does not choose

Vol. XXIX, No. 3, April, 1960

nobly to sacrifice self-interest. Honour only apparently has much to do with his decision; he clearly associates it with Cœur-de-lion when he tells John that his supposed father, Faulconbridge, was "A soldier by the honour-giving hand/Of Cœur-de-lion knighted in the field."[2] But later, speaking to his now half-brother, he oversimplifies the alternatives when he says, "My father gave me honour, yours gave land." At the moment of choice he did not actually believe himself the son of Cœur-de-lion—later in the scene he solicits his mother for his real father's name. Instead, he had accepted honour as an investment in the future—"Brother, take you my land, I'll take my chance"—gambling on the "chance" that his continued association with John and Eleanor would produce dividends. His choice, then, has involved a public proclamation of honour, a private acceptance of self-interest. As we shall see later, this is the principal strategy by which Commodity makes its "smooth-faced" way in the world of *King John*. But, as we shall also see, the Bastard's motives in this scene undergo a change, or, more precisely, they pass through a series of changes that constitutes one of the first explorations which this play makes of the relationship between Commodity and Honour.

When he makes his choice, and immediately afterwards, the Bastard embraces self-interest while professing honour; but once he has achieved his immediate aim, the mocking and even flippant ironies of his speech assume a different cast. The opening lines of his first soliloquy are suggestive:

> Brother, adieu; good fortune come to thee!
> For thou wast got i' th' way of honesty.
> (*Exeunt all but Bastard.*)
> A foot of honour better than I was;
> But many a foot of land the worse.

The public graciousness is subjected, after the exit, to the diminution of private irony, the "way of honesty" to the measure of material gain. But the admission is also made, and privately, that the gain of new honour has been attended by the loss of old honour—legitimacy. The ambiguity of statement mirrors while it explores the ambivalence of the Bastard's moral self-consciousness. Yet it is only after he learns the truth of his parentage that he becomes genuinely involved with his new identity and graduates from the endorsement of honour as a pragmatic good to an avowal of it even against social scorn. The violence of his advocacy of his mother here is not, despite surface resemblances, the brash impetuosity of a Hotspur; it follows logically from, and reflexively illuminates, the

fact that his soliloquy on "new-made honour" was self-satire as well as social satire. However, if in this first scene we are seeing the Bastard's growth of moral awareness, that growth is still embryonic. At the conclusion of the scene his conception of honour, though altered, remains unsophisticated; it is regarded less as the inherence of ethical values than as a transferable award which one can receive through inheritance or merit through physical exploit. The Bastard has not yet outgrown Hotspur. Nevertheless he has formed one resolution which we would do well to remember. Observing that flattery and deceit serve as "sweet poison for the age's tooth," he adds, "Which, though I will not practise to deceive/Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn."

In Act II, lines 156–8, another choice is offered, not to the Bastard but to Arthur. The alternatives, however, are not the same as earlier. When John says,

> Arthur of Bretagne, yield thee to my hand,
> And out of my dear love I'll give thee more
> Than e'er the coward hand of France can win . . .

he not only characterizes the motives of France, and of himself, but also places Arthur in the position of having to choose between two kinds of Commodity and thus to announce by implication his self-interestedness. Arthur remains silent, refusing the terms of the choice not because he recognizes the phrasings of deceit but simply because he is utterly lacking in self-interest—"I am not worth this coil that's made for me." Constance, however, has no scruples about choosing for him, and she is willing to take what the "hand of France can win." Her self-interest is masked, not consciously perhaps, within the *cliché* of doting motherhood, and Eleanor is probably close to the truth when she says, "Out, insolent! thy bastard shall be king/That thou mayst be a queen, and check the world!"—which, incidentally, tells us as much about accuser as about accused. What Constance fails to realize, however, is the pervasiveness of Commodity. Perceiving it in John, she does not see that it is also the "bias of the world." It is perhaps because her own self-interest is not consciously masked that she fails to penetrate the conscious masks of others—of France in particular. Certainly a clearer awareness of the issues involved would have made her realize the irrelevance of exhorting Lewis to defy John on the basis of "thine honour, Lewis, thine honour!"

The position of Constance and Arthur is analogous to that of Blanche, who, like Arthur, achieves a genuine alliance with Honour only to find that Commodity, that "daily break-vow, he that wins of all," wins most

from those who are innocently unaware of his nature. Only Blanche and the Bastard are untainted by the epidemic of deceit in which the marriage of expediency is conceived. Spurred by Eleanor to "Urge them while their souls/Are capable of this ambition," John delivers his proposal to France (Act II, scene 1, lines 484–6):

> If that the Dauphin there, thy princely son,
> Can in this book of beauty read, "I love,"
> Her dowry shall weigh equal with a queen.

France hastily directs Lewis' attention to Blanche's face, and in that "book of beauty" Lewis finds, with remarkable decision, that he can indeed read *I love*. In fact, he reads it aloud and so grandiloquently that he draws the Bastard's immediate scorn for such patent dissemblance. Blanche informs Lewis in private that she is subservient to John's royal will; however, refusing to participate in the general deceit, she candidly adds, "Further I will not flatter you, my lord,/That all I see in you is worthy love." Despite her private misgivings, when John asks for her decision Blanche publicly pledges him her loyalty by saying, "That she is bound in honour still to do/What you in wisdom still vouchsafe to say." But in the world of *King John* this sort of honour, so innocent as to misconstrue Commodity as "wisdom," has little survival value. After her marriage and with the renewal of war, Blanche strives to expand her honour to encompass her obligations to both John and her husband Lewis. The result, as she says (Act III, scene 1, lines 328–30), is that

> I am with both; each army hath a hand,
> And in their rage, I having hold of both,
> They whirl assunder and dismember me.

Like Arthur, Blanche represents honour in a world of Commodity, and like Arthur, she is whirled by the forces of Commodity to her destruction.

Despite its dominant station in the hierarchy of men's motives, Commodity by no means receives the stamp of Shakespeare's dramatic approval. If it is the force against which Honour is tested, it is itself in turn tested by Honour. Whirled asunder by the two armies of Commodity, Blanche is not an object of derision but of sympathy. Yet the Honour she has embraced is found wanting—deficient because it is naïve, because it is untempered by awareness, because it has survived no inner tests. Untested within, it succumbs inevitably to the test of Commodity from without. Blanche, like York in *Richard II*, yields to the will of her sovereign in the best accord with Tudor Doctrine; but her

problem, like York's, is complicated by the presence of two sovereigns. If Shakespeare is glancing at Tudor Doctrine, then, as Lily Campbell feels he so often is,[3] it is not to extol that doctrine so much as to explore it, to test it dramatically, not in political but in human terms. The judgment of the drama is that the doctrine is simply too inflexible, too arbitrary, too unrealistic. Blanche's attempt to solve her insoluble dilemma leads to her destruction; York, reading the script of Tudor Doctrine with strict literalness, acts out his proper rôle and in doing so is deprived of essential humanity. Nevertheless, Shakespeare is no more deluded by the efficacy of Commodity than he is by the virtue of Honour; in the very process of discrediting Honour, Commodity is itself discredited. That is, if there is any suspicion that Shakespeare is endorsing Commodity in *King John*, it should be dispelled by observing that Commodity is the means by which Shakespeare achieves satiric diminution in the play. Austria, France, and Lewis, not to mention John, are all rendered ridiculous by the very fact that even among men so thoroughly Commodity-conscious, Commodity must be concealed behind a façade of Honour. The rents in the façade are the windows of dramatic deflation, as we can see, perhaps more clearly, with the English nobles.

Salisbury and Pembroke have been too often regarded as a momentarily dissonant but then beautifully harmonic chorus singing the praises of national unity for English audiences intensely patriotic following the defeat of the Spanish armada. If this is all that Shakespeare's audiences saw in the nobles—and there is no guarantee of that—then Shakespeare was giving his audiences a good deal more than they deserved. To begin with, the nobles' criticism of John's second coronation (Act IV, scene 2) is not, as it might seem, merely the constructive advice of loyal subjects. We should note the opening of the following scene:

> SAL. Lords, I will meet him at Saint Edmundsbury.
> It is our safety, and we must embrace
> This gentle offer of the perilous time.
> PEM. Who brought that letter from the Cardinal?
> SAL. The Count Melun, a noble lord of France;
> Whose private with me of the Dauphin's love
> Is much more general than these lines import.

The Bastard's greeting a moment later—"Once more to-day well met, distempered lords"—establishes the day of this exchange as still that of the previous scene. Either the nobles have been in communication with the Dauphin for some time then, or Melun's delivery of the letter to Salisbury represents Lewis' first overture. If the former is true, the

nobles clearly were traitorous even before their criticism of John in scene 2, and if the latter is true, Lewis must have had some prior indication of their willingness to co-operate, else why send Melun to these particular nobles? In either event, suspicion is cast upon the nobles' high indignation at the announcement of Arthur's supposed death; and their protestations of dutiful subservience to John in the same scene (e.g., Salisbury's "Since all and every part of what we would/Doth make a stand at what your Highness will," Act IV, scene 2) acquire retrospectively an ironic, if not a hypocritical, cast. Moreover, knowing that the nobles have already decided for their "safety" to embrace the "gentle offer of the perilous time," we can see that in their speeches over Arthur's body, Commodity, now motivating treason, has become for Shakespeare a most incisive means for subverting the lofty pretensions of offended Honour. Tillyard has rightly observed that "the levity of [the nobles'] reasoning" here is betrayed "by the extravagance of their sentiments";[4] however, the point is not so much that their reasoning is specious logically as that it is specious ethically. If their premiss of Commodity is granted, their real reasoning is sound, if not terribly subtle: to take advantage of an ideally fortuitous opportunity for masking dishonourable action behind honourable indignation. Their rôles are overacted, to be sure—especially Salisbury's, whose 25 lines of bombast are as devoid of genuine sorrow as the Bastard's single sentence is freighted with it. Pembroke, however, displays their real line of reasoning and demonstrates at the same time considerable genius for rationalization when he says that the heinousness of Arthur's murder "Shall give a holiness, a purity,/To the yet unbegotten sin of times"—for example, he would probably add, the not quite unbegotten sin of their own imminent treason.

When we see them next (Act V, scene 2), the nobles are still cloaking Commodity in the vestments of Honour. The business of signing to treason dispatched, Salisbury laments for 31 lines, all after the fact, that

> . . . such is the infection of the time,
> That, for the health and physic of our right,
> We cannot deal but with the very hand
> Of stern injustice and confused wrong.

He is perfectly accurate in everything, provided "right" be changed to read "profit"; and his conclusion, with its wish that "these two Christian armies might combine/The blood of malice in a vein of league," would be impressive indeed, if it did not remind us that the two nations already joined once in such a league—the very league that called forth the

Bastard's speech on Commodity. Or again, when Salisbury's grief produces what Lewis calls "this honourable dew/That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks," it is a little difficult not to hear an echo of Salisbury's own comment when Hubert wept at the sight of Arthur's body: "Trust not those cunning waters of his eyes,/For villainy is not without such rheum." Although Lewis' answering speech is as fraught with noble sentiment as was Salisbury's, it is quite clear that both are speaking the language of ceremony on a stage of Honour. Even Lewis finally wearies of the extended hypocrisy and puts the matter in its real light by saying,

> Come, come; for thou shalt thrust thy hand as deep
> Into the purse of rich prosperity
> As Lewis himself; so, nobles, shall you all. . . .

Needless to say, this view of Salisbury and Pembroke implies that their final and seemingly glorious reversion to the English cause should be regarded with more than a little suspicion. Before dealing with that, however, let us return to the first half of the play again and examine John and the Bastard in the light of the theme we have been tracing. In the opening act we saw Shakespeare using the Bastard's changing attitudes towards Commodity and Honour as indices of his ethical development. Later, in Blanche, we saw internally untested Honour tested externally by and succumbing to the pressures of Commodity, and still later, in the English nobles, we saw Commodity used as a satiric device to deflate pretensions of Honour. In all these instances Commodity and Honour were Shakespeare's principal means of characterization, and he also uses them to characterize John and the Bastard. We should not forget, however, that the process works reciprocally, that the persons in the drama are not only characterized by, but also characterize, the ethical principles. By her adherence to Honour in a world of Commodity, Blanche is characterized as honourable in what would seem to be an ideally pure manner. Yet she in turn, by proving too innocent to survive the pressures of Commodity, characterizes pure Honour as an impracticable moral guide. The nobles, on the other hand, have survived and even prospered so far largely because their Commodity was not unadulterated, because they were not unaware of at least the habiliments of Honour and of the manner in which these can be worn to further the ends of Commodity. Their successful application of Commodity, however, is such only within the illusion of life created by the drama; their successes within are simultaneously failures from without, from the perspective of audience or reader, and the inversion of effect is produced

by satiric techniques. With the nobles we have seen Commodity thrust to the extreme of treason; with John we shall see it thrust to the extreme of murder.

During the first, and inferior, half of the play John represents for the most part "An English King," in Tillyard's phrase. Although his occupation of the throne is for self-interest, yet his interests coincide up to a point with those of England, for despite his virtues Arthur hardly qualifies as a desirable king. His youth, the domination of Constance, and the partisanship of the French all argue against the application of the rule of primogeniture. At any rate, when the play opens John not only is king but is kingly. He also has, significantly, the approval of Fortune.

As in *Richard III*, but less obtrusively, the supernatural invades the field of human action in *King John*. Events are determined by decisions based upon either Commodity or Honour, but once the human decisions have been made, a supernatural judgment is pronounced upon them. Sometimes these judgments take the form of prophecy or of prophetic invocation—as with Constance, Pandulph, and Pomfret; at others they are to be inferred from the behaviour of wind and sea; at still others they are identified as a quality of "the times." For example, early in Act II Fortune graces John's decision to invade France through the instrument of the unfavourable, to France, winds which delay Chatillon's return to warn King Philip. In Act IV, scene 2, when John receives tidings of the French invasion, Fortune has shifted sides. Early in Act III Constance confirms the fact that John still stands in grace when she tells Arthur that Fortune "adulterates hourly with thine uncle John." It is at this point, however, that John's fortunes begin to change for the worse. He and Philip have just negotiated the betrothal of Blanche and Lewis, the bargain that elicited the Bastard's speech on Commodity. The indignant Constance delivers a prophetic invocation that "No bargains break that are not this day made./This day, all things begun come to ill end." (Act III, scene 1, lines 93–4.) The bargain marriage league is indeed immediately broken, and John, who has begun to act upon Commodity, has made the first fatal step on the road to an "ill end."

Since John does win the ensuing battle with France, it would appear that he still remains in grace. But the victory and the capture of Arthur are at best a mixed blessing. Combining the agents of wind and sea in his metaphor, Philip (Act III, scene 4) implies that Fortune is still with John:

> So, by a roaring tempest on the flood,
> A whole armado of convicted sail
> Is scattered and disjoin'd from fellowship.

However, Pandulph immediately assures him that "all shall yet go well," and a little later in this scene Pandulph says to Lewis:

> No, no; when Fortune means to men most good,
> She looks upon them with a threat'ning eye.
> Tis strange to think how much King John hath lost
> In this which he accounts so clearly won.

Thus, although seeming to have remained the same, John's fortunes have actually altered in accordance with Constance's prophecy. But the Commodity marriage is not the sole or the most important reason for the decline of John's fortunes; it is only a prelude to the central scene of *King John* (Act III, scene 3) where the superb dramatic tension created by John's Iago-like probings of Hubert culminates in the terse agreement to murder Arthur:

> K. JOHN. Death.
> HUB. My Lord?
> K. JOHN. A grave.
> HUB. He shall not live.

This scene is central to *King John* both thematically and structurally. Having condemned to death the one person who utterly lacks a sense of self-interest, John serves both to damn and to be damned by Commodity. Prior to this scene the pace of the play has been leisurely, the action deliberate, the scope of events wide. From this point on the scope narrows and the action becomes precipitous; scene now gives way to scene with abruptness and rapidity as the structure of the play mirrors while it helps display John's hurtle towards destruction. Fortune has clearly shifted, and as Pandulph says to the temporarily dispirited Lewis (Act III, scene 4, lines 146–8):

> John lays you plots; the times conspire with you;
> For he that steeps his safety in true blood
> Shall find but bloody safety and untrue.

In the scene in which Hubert threatens to put out Arthur's eyes (Act IV, scene 1), the current of the action momentarily eddies. The scene has been much maligned for many good reasons, but the blatant sentimentality does serve a dramatic purpose. The principal function of the scene is to intensify John's guilt by a graphic dilation upon the cruelty of his intentions towards Arthur. This intensification of guilt is partly accomplished by contrasting John's orders with Hubert's attempts to carry them out, for if in John Commodity is now motivating cruelty and murder, in Hubert it is being sacrificed to Honour and mercy.

Arthur is again the epitome of selflessness. Hubert has accepted John's commission partly from blind loyalty and partly from a desire for gain; however, when he finally relents, Hubert clearly renounces self-interest: "I will not touch thine eye/For all the treasure that thine uncle owes." His decision constitutes not only a renunciation but also an endangering of his self-interest—"Much danger do I undergo for thee." Hubert's later treatment at the hands of John and the English nobles illustrates once more that in *King John* Honour must be its own reward.

During the first half of the play the Bastard—"that mixture of greatness and levity," as Dr. Johnson saw him—is motivated by a spurious sense of Honour alloyed with some amount of self-interest. His levity rather than his greatness predominates. He is brash and reckless, quick both to perceive and to offer insult. His major interest is in acquiring prestige by avenging his father's death at the hands of Austria. However, his resolution in Act I to learn the ways of deceit, not to employ them but to recognize their employment by others, has not gone unobserved. In Act II not only is he a sardonic critic of hypocrisy and pseudo-chivalric bravado but he is also an ironic parodist of the absurd extremes to which Commodity inclines kings and armies. When the Citizen of Angiers (or Hubert, as the First Folio more logically has it) denies both armies entrance to the city, the Bastard with tongue in cheek exhorts John and Philip to join forces temporarily and, as John paraphrases him a moment later, "lay this Angiers even with the ground;/ Then after fight who shall be king of it." Their acceptance of his ironic proposal reveals the folly to which men are led when a myopic preoccupation with schemes of self-interest blinds them to the fact that means may destroy ends. The *reductio ad absurdum* of Commodity has been reached.

However, the Bastard's ethics are by no means unquestionable. If he can recognize and deflate Commodity, yet he is willing to fight in one of its armies. Even his criticism of Commodity prior to the Commodity speech lacks the solidity of moral conviction, and when this criticism culminates in the Commodity speech it is not to renounce but to embrace Commodity. Both Tillyard and Bonjour contend that the final lines of the speech—"Since kings break faith upon Commodity,/Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee"—are uttered merely in self-deprecation and that the Bastard never acts upon them. I agree that he is incapable of real villainy, and yet the commission John gives him to ransack the monasteries is obviously a reward for his rescue of Eleanor and his acquittal of himself in battle. To be sure, there is no mention of his having profited from the enterprise; however, the very nature of the commission

would seem to imply tacitly that some of the liberated "angels" should be reincarcerated in the Bastard's pocket. At any rate, at the conclusion of Act III neither the Bastard nor John represents the lack of self-interest or the sense of responsibility to England demanded of the kingly character.

Act IV, scene 1, as mentioned earlier, serves to intensify John's guilt; and in scene 2 we find that the nobles have grown seditious. John's second coronation is a touchstone of his political insecurity. His situation worsens when Hubert falsely reports Arthur's death. Attempting to see John as a tragic hero, Bonjour finds him genuinely repenting his decision to do away with Arthur. Certainly he regrets the decision once the supposed murder is announced, but it is difficult to believe that his regret is based on anything but the failure of the murder to serve his designs. When the nobles stalk out, John says, "They burn in indignation. I repent," and the juxtaposition of his political loss with his personal repentence is too obvious not to suggest a causal relation. Further on, when Hubert informs him that Arthur is not dead after all, John says, "Doth Arthur live? O, haste thee to the peers," and again the immediacy with which his thoughts flit from Arthur to his own political interests is revealing. Finally, since his desire for Arthur's death was rooted in Commodity, any genuine repentence on his part would involve a renunciation of Commodity. Instead, our next glimpse of him shows him in the act of capitulating to Pandulph (Act V, scene 1), not of course for religious reasons but merely for Commodity. Receiving the crown back from Pandulph, he says:

> Now keep your holy word. Go meet the French,
> And from his Holiness use all your power
> To stop their marches 'fore we are inflam'd.

Clearly, the exchange of the crown carries the same stamp as the marriage league of Act II: it is merely a bargain entered into by John to prevent his deposition by the French.[5]

If John has sunk to contemptible depths of Commodity, even to the point of shaming An English King, the Bastard has steadily risen towards the genuine Honour befitting An English King. His words over the body of Arthur are the major indication of his spiritual growth; yet without some preparation this speech would mark an altogether too abrupt deepening of character—and Shakespeare provides the preparation. Returning from his forays upon the monasteries (Act IV, scene 2) the Bastard meets the irate departing nobles—"With eyes as red as new-enkindled fire," as he tells John. His first words to John are hardly

respectful: "But if you be afeard to hear the worst,/Then let the worst unheard fall on your head." Throughout this scene his remarks to John are terse and restrained, suggesting a grave preoccupation. Disturbed by rumours and prophecies abroad, by news of the invading French and by the report of Arthur's death, he cannot help but suspect John. His remark that he has seen the nobles

> And others more, going to seek the grave
> Of Arthur, whom they say is kill'd to-night
> On your suggestion,

is most carefully phrased. He withholds comment on the nobles' accusation and in doing so tactfully offers John a chance to deny his guilt. It is in this scene that we see the Bastard beginning to make a distinction between An English King and the man John as king. His respect for the former prevents him from too hastily condemning the latter. Already he has come a good distance from the brash and impetuous young man of the first three acts. In the following scene 3 he again reveals his emotional growth by responding to Pembroke's "Sir, sir, impatience hath his privilege" with " 'Tis true, to hurt his master, no man else"—a reply clearly demonstrating insight into his own earlier rashness.

All this prepares for the following scene when, over the body of Arthur, the Bastard makes the first of two major choices between Commodity and Honour. With England invaded, her forces divided and her king ineffectual, it is plainly to his advantage to follow the departed nobles. Yet when he says, "I am amaz'd, methinks, and lose my way/Among the thorns and dangers of this world," his words not only express his present bewilderment but also represent his sudden awareness of the superficiality of his previous ethics. The man of action becomes for an intense moment the man of thought. Shakespeare compresses within the remainder of the Bastard's speech his acceptance of Arthur's claim to the succession, his declaration against John as the man of self-interest, his recognition of England's loss of fortune, and his decision to ally himself, not with John, but with England. In short, the Bastard renounces with evident risk the principle of Commodity and commits himself to the highest form of Honour. By so doing, he becomes morally worthy of the crown.

It is no accident that immediately following the Bastard's speech we are shown (Act V, scene 1) John demonstrating his own moral weaknesses by capitulating to Pandulph and enduring unremarked such hypocritical sarcasm as Pandulph's "But since you are a gentle convertite,/My tongue shall hush again this storm of war." Indeed, far from

feeling any sense of mortification, John is overjoyed, rejoicing that the prophecy of his deposition has come true differently than he had thought: "I did suppose it should be on constraint;/ But, heaven be thank'd it is but voluntary." By such an act and such rejoicing, John forfeits all moral right to the crown. Not only by the juxtaposition of the two scenes, but also by the disparity of their attitudes within this second scene, the Bastard and John are thrown into dramatic contrast. John's attitude is obvious from, among other things, his choice of pronouns: "Would not *my* lords return to *me* again . . ."; "The legate of the Pope hath been with *me*,/And *I* have made a happy peace with him." The Bastard, on the other hand, speaks only of "us": "Shall *we*, upon the footing of *our* land . . ." (my italics). The absence of any ethical principles in John has resulted in the elevation of self-interest above the good of England. In the moment of crisis John has only himself to rely upon—and his self is a moral vacuum. Still trying to escape, or perhaps still unaware of, moral realities, he degenerates into feeble vacillations. The Bastard, despite his earlier suspicions, is clearly dumbfounded by John's total collapse. When he tries to stir him to action by defining the ideal reactions of a king (lines 43–61), the Bastard is defining himself. When he denounces as "inglorious" the league John has made with Pandulph, his convictions are those of An English King. Finally, when John says weakly, "Have thou the ordering of this present time," his words represent a symbolic relinquishment of the crown to the man who deserves it morally but not legally.

Yet if the Bastard has committed himself to Honour, it is no such ingenuous Honour as that which precipitated Blanche to destruction. It has at least once already withstood the severest inner tests of Commodity, and it has proven shrewdly adept at discerning Commodity in others. When (Act V, scene 2) he berates the French, the Bastard speaks not only as John's surrogate but as the symbol of An English King: "Now hear our English King,/ For thus his royalty doth speak in me." The ambiguity of "royalty" is deliberate, for as the son of Richard I the Bastard has some claim to literal truth, and certainly his scornful defiance here by no means mirrors the John for whom he ostensibly speaks. However, the Bastard is not nearly so confident as he makes out; his "brave," as Lewis calls it, should remind us of his satiric deflations of chivalric bravado earlier in the play. What he is doing here, it seems apparent, is turning Commodity against itself, attempting to prevent the possible overthrow of England by deluding the superior French forces into arbitration. In short, he is using the techniques of Commodity in the service of Honour.

The following scene (Act V, scene 3) is particularly noteworthy. The shortest of the entire play, its very brevity calls attention to it as the culmination of a series of continuing contrasts between the Bastard and John. We have just seen the Bastard's shrewd attempt to delude the French with solitary defiance as he plays the symbolic rôle of An English King. Now we are shown John completely incapacitated—not by poison, for he has not yet gone to Swinstead Abbey where the poisoning occurs, but by a fever. The fever, which has troubled him for some time, is less physiological than psychological; it represents perhaps a form of divine punishment for Arthur's death as well as John's unconscious awareness that in moral reality he is no longer king. His symbolic relinquishment of the crown to the Bastard earlier is confirmed by the arrival of a Messenger with the words:

> My lord, your valiant kinsman, Faulconbridge,
> Desires your Majesty to leave the field
> And send him word by me which way you go.

This is not, one notes, the request of a subject, but the order, the "desire," of one who is quite aware of his authority. Nor is John's prompt obedience to be taken lightly; feverish or not, the head of an army does not withdraw from the field without his withdrawal being interpreted as a signal of disaster. But John is only the titular head of England now, and his withdrawal is not in the least damaging; the Bastard remains on the field, clearly in command, and, as Salisbury ruefully remarks, "In spite of spite, alone upholds the day." No sooner does the Bastard "desire" John to leave the field than Fortune turns against the French, for immediately after John acquiesces to the Bastard's order the Messenger adds:

> Be of good comfort; for the great supply
> That was expected by the Dauphin here,
> Are wreck'd three nights ago on Goodwin Sands.

The fact that the supply ships were wrecked "three nights ago" does not alter the fact that Shakespeare chooses to present the information dramatically at this precise point. Later (Act V, scene 5) the same information is reported to Lewis along with the news that "The Count Melun is slain; the English lords/By his persuasion are again fallen off." In short, the ill fortune that has dogged the English since John's decision to murder Arthur (Act III, scene 3) is reversed when the Bastard's symbolic private deposition of John is publicly confirmed by John's departure from the battlefield.

There are two obvious objections to this theory about the change of English fortunes: first, that the return of the English nobles seems more clearly to act as the symbolic cause; and, second, that the Bastard's later loss of his forces in the tides seems to belie the change. The return of the nobles, however, is a matter of simple expediency occasioned by Melun's warning that Lewis intended to execute them if he carried the day. No doubt the nobles have some trace of patriotic sentiment, or, if not that, they must at least realize from the narrowness of their escape that Commodity proves a most unreliable guide to action. However, the fact that before facing John they first ingratiate themselves with the young Prince Henry, who can serve as their intercessor with John, suggests that their interests are not entirely in the welfare of England.

The second objection—that the Bastard's loss of half his army in the Lincoln Washes argues against a change of English fortune—requires that we examine the Bastard's situation at this time. Through the second half of *King John* we have seen him steadily rising towards the station of An English King. In a symbolic sense he has deposed John and successfully led the English armies. With the news that John is dying, then, the opportunity has arisen for him to transform a symbolic kingship into an actual kingship; he has only to forswear Honour. This possibility is tentatively suggested by Hubert when he says (Act V, scene 4):

> I left [John] almost speechless, and broke out
> To acquaint you with this evil, that you might
> The better arm you to the sudden time
> Than if you had at leisure known of this.

Realizing that with the return of the traitorous nobles a power struggle may ensue, Hubert pledges his support to the Bastard. A few lines later, when the Bastard says, not so much to Hubert as to himself, "Withhold thine indignation, mighty heaven,/And tempt us not to bear above our power!" he is speaking not only with reference to the nobles but also with reference to himself, simultaneously acknowledging an impulse to kingship and admitting the dishonourableness of that impulse. As he said a little earlier to Hubert, "I come one way of the Plantagenets," and "one way" is not sufficient to justify an aspiration to the crown. Now, having phrased the alternatives of Honour and Commodity, he is reminded of something by his use of the word *power*. When he adds, "I'll tell thee, Hubert, half my power this night,/Passing these flats, are taken by the tide," he has realized that the loss of his army has personal as well as military implications, that this check of power also represents

a form of divine injunction against any attempt to seize power for himself. As in the scene over Arthur's body, he again makes his decision quickly—"conduct me to the King"—and with this decision he again renounces Commodity and redeclares himself for the good of England, thus becoming most worthy of the crown at the moment of rejecting it.

It is, therefore, perfectly appropriate that the Bastard is given the concluding speech of the play, which is usually reserved for the king. He has confirmed his loyalty to England and to the soon-to-be King Henry III in this final scene. Yet this final speech of his, with its conspicuously qualifying "if"—". . . Naught shall make us rue,/If England to itself do rest but true"—is not just a set piece of perfunctory patriotism with which to conclude the play. The Bastard is too perspicacious and he has had too much experience with the renegade nobles not to be suspicious of their professions of Honour in this last scene. His closing speech is both a stirring proclamation of an ideal—but not, he realizes, untempered—national unity, and also his declaration to the nobles of the standards by which he has been governed and by which he expects them to be governed in the future. Thus, with what we might call "experienced" Honour dictating the terms to Commodity, *King John* concludes upon the same theme with which it began.

NOTES

1 Adrien Bonjour, in "The Road to Swinstead Abbey," *ELH*, XVIII (1951), offers the best, and indeed almost the only, defense of the structure of *King John*. All further references to Bonjour are to this article.

2 The text I am using is that of Neilson and Hill in *The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1942).

3 *Shakespeare's "Histories": Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (San Marino, 1947).

4 *Shakespeare's History Plays* (New York, 1946), 223.

5 Further evidence that John's exchange of the crown is rooted in Commodity can be found in his remark when he sends the Bastard after the nobles: "I have a way to win their loves again./Bring them before me," (Act IV, scene 2, lines 169–70). Since John does not yet know that Arthur is alive, this cannot be his "way to win their loves again." Instead, it seems clear that he has already decided to use Pandulph as a means of stopping the French. His self-deposition is thus merely a tactic by which to insure his crown.

HISTORICAL CAUSATION AND HUMAN FREE WILL

W. H. Dray

The question which I wish to discuss is whether the assumption of universal causation in history—the assumption that any event or condition studied by the historian can, in principle, be explained by indicating its cause or causes—conflicts with the assumption that human beings, whose actions contribute so largely to these events or conditions, possess free will. That both of these assumptions are made in the course of ordinary historical inquiry, it seems rather difficult to deny; and it is only natural that the recognition of this fact should have embarrassed, not only philosophers of history, but many practising historians as well. Thus, although historians regularly use the word "cause" (or one of its many substitutes) in the explanatory narratives they offer of past happenings, it is a common complaint among them, when confronted with certain theories of the historical process, that such theories mistakenly attempt to represent the course of history as determined. And when a reflective and self-critical historian like Professor Charles A. Beard urges his fellows to abandon causal language altogether on the similar ground that it implies determinism, it may seem that this complaint is only being pressed to its logical conclusion.[1]

It will be the thesis of this paper[2] that Beard's proposed reform is, happily, quite unnecessary, since the assumptions of causation and of free will are not, after all, incompatible. For I shall argue that, whether the doctrine of determinism is true or false, the assumption of universal causation, in view of the way the concept of causation is employed in history, does *not* commit historians to a belief in that doctrine. By contrast—and in spite of what many philosophers have written recently to the contrary[3]—I shall argue that a belief in determinism *is* incompatible with the assumption of free will.

I

Let me try to show, first, why I think that the apparent clash between

the assumptions of free will and determinism cannot successfully be resolved by representing the clash as apparent only. The most popular ways of attempting such resolution seem to me to reduce to three. I shall examine each of them briefly in turn.

The first has proved popular in recent years among moral philosophers seeking to protect the meaningfulness of moral judgments in a world increasingly impressed by the success of psychology and the social sciences in their search for laws of human nature. Such philosophers have argued that to contrast freedom with determinism is to make a logical mistake. For the polar opposite of freedom is not determinism but compulsion or constraint; and the opposite of determinism is simply indeterminism. If this is so, it would, of course, follow that the historian's assumption that at least some of the actions he studies are free is perfectly compatible with the assumption that all actions are determined by antecedent conditions—not all of which need be of the sort we call compelling or constraining. Indeed, it has even been argued that, far from assuming any freedom which denies causal determinism, our moral judgments actually *require* us to assume determinism; for to be our own free act, it is necessary that what we do be determined by our own characters; and for moral blame to be in point, it must be possible for it to produce relevant alterations in the actions of the person to whom it is addressed. If this ingenious argument is sound, the historian need worry no longer about his proneness to make both of the assumptions under discussion. For, far from being incompatible, it would appear that the two may be necessarily connected.

Ingenious as it is, however, it seems to me that this type of argument itself rests upon a logical confusion: the failure to distinguish between freedom of action and freedom of the will. *Of course* we should not say that a boy who creeps unwillingly to school under threat of punishment goes freely, for this is exactly the sort of situation (and not, for example, a situation in which he is carried or pushed, and thus does not *act* at all) in which it would be proper to speak of his action as compelled. But whether a person is forced to act in this sense, and therefore lacks freedom of action, is quite irrelevant to the question whether the action he performs is an exercise of free will. What is at stake in raising the latter question is whether, even if his action was compelled or constrained, the agent could nevertheless have acted otherwise—and taken the consequences. It seems to me that if determinism means anything, it means that such an agent could *not* have acted otherwise, unless certain antecedent conditions—for example, his character or circum-

stances—had been a little different. And this claim that all action is fully determined by antecedent conditions actually obtaining is, it seems to me, exactly what the attribution of free will to an agent is intended to deny.

The argument just considered represents an attempt to escape from our difficulty by re-defining "freedom of the will" so that it becomes synonymous with "freedom of action." A second type of argument which is frequently advanced seems to me to attempt to escape by an equally questionable re-definition of "determinism." For it has been argued that, although the doctrine of determinism asserts that whatever happens falls under a law, in accordance with which it might, in principle, have been predicted, we utterly misconceive the nature of such laws if we conclude from this that what happens in accordance with a law happens necessarily. A statement of law, we are often told, is simply the statement that whenever anything occurs which satisfies the specification contained in its antecedent clause, it will be followed by something which satisfies the specification contained in its consequent clause—a point which is sometimes put by calling law statements "descriptive." The laws of nature are, of course, formulated as open universal statements; that is, they are assumed to apply to cases beyond those actually examined in formulating them. But their *descriptive* rather than *prescriptive* force is shown, it may be said, in the fact that if experience fails to match the predictions we believe they license us to make, we simply modify our formulation of the laws, so that they conform to what we actually experience. Such laws can scarcely be regarded as governing or necessitating the future; for they are themselves dependent upon what the future happens to bring.

Now there are two interpretations which might be placed upon the admitted fact that all statements of law are open to correction in the light of future experience. We might say, for example, that although in asserting such statements we are asserting that certain types of events or conditions are necessarily connected, we can never be absolutely sure (since our inquiry is an empirical one) that at any particular time we have discovered what the necessary connections really are—that is, that our *statement* of the laws is correct. But those who represent the assumptions of free will and determinism as compatible in the light of a "descriptive" analysis of law, obviously want to derive much more radical conclusions from this well-known methodological fact. They want to say that a law formulates, not necessary, but purely factual, connections; they want to say that in stating a law they are simply asserting that

the regularity it formulates *will in fact* hold in the future. I think it is clear that a belief in laws of this sort is quite compatible with a belief in human free will; for there would appear to be no reason, on this view of their logical status, why men may not make their own laws of behaviour by exercising that free will—it being, in that case, impossible in principle, not only for the determinist, but for God himself, to know what the laws are going to be, until the last man has had his fling. The reduction of "law" to "regularity in fact holding in past, present and future"—and it should be noted that some of these so-called "regularities" might have but a single actual instance—in effect reduces the determinist's claim from the assertion that what will be must be, to the merely tautologous assertion that what will be will be—with perhaps the equally tautologous corollary that, if (with luck) we succeed in saying what it is that will be before it comes about, then what will be will necessarily be what we may say it will be. That this is what is ordinarily meant by the assumption of determinism, appears to me quite incredible.

It remains to mention a third way of dealing with the problem: the drawing of a Kantian distinction between two standpoints from which human actions can be viewed: the one, the standpoint of the agent, from which the assumption of free will is made; the other, the standpoint of an observer of the action, from which causal determinism is assumed. Such an approach has at least the merit of not attempting to explain the contradiction away; it attempts instead to find a way of living with it. But although the doctrine of the double standpoint does serve in some ways to clarify the problem—and I shall make use of its terminology again below—it is difficult to see how it can be represented, as it stands, as a "solution" to it. If we interpret Kant's own formulation literally, the "solution" consists of locating free action and determined behaviour in different worlds, so that the problem of their incompatibility is not allowed to arise: a "solution" which eliminates the clash by asserting a mystery. But if we interpret the doctrine rather as pointing out that there are two ways of thinking about the *same* world, are we really any nearer understanding how it is logically possible to make both assumptions?

Perhaps a psychologist or a social scientist might, for the limited purposes of his own inquiry, ignore such difficulties on the ground that his approach to his subject-matter is consistently made from a single standpoint: that of an observer of action. But for the historian, no such easy escape from the problem is possible. For even if—as is seldom the

case—he denies himself the luxury of pronouncing overt moral judgments upon the actions he studies, he will at least want to investigate them from the standpoint of the agents who performed them, as well as from the standpoint of a social observer.[4] Committed as he is by the very nature of his inquiry to such a double standpoint, the historian seems to be faced with a dilemma which surely justifies the conceptual uneasiness displayed by Professor Beard. For if his causal judgments do, as is generally assumed, imply a full-blooded determinism, he must either admit two worlds, or he must contend that the agent, the cause of whose actions he has discovered, both could and could not have done otherwise. And unless some further elucidation of the latter contention is forthcoming, it would appear to involve the historian in an obvious self-contradition.

II

I have argued that belief in determinism, which is usually thought to be implied by causal judgment, cannot be reconciled with the assumption of free will which historians normally make in investigating what was done by various persons in the past. The question I now want to raise is whether causal judgment in history really does imply determinism. It seems to me that, in so far as it is human action in the full sense that historians are dealing with, the answer to this question must be in the negative. For, as I shall now attempt to show, the connection between actions and the causes historians discover for them is in most, although perhaps not all, cases "loose" in a way which makes it impossible to say that those actions are *determined* by their causes.[5]

My claim that the causes of action in history are only loosely connected with their effects is open to more than one interpretation. Let me begin, therefore, by saying what I do not mean by it. One thing I do not mean is that historians—perhaps because of the special problems encountered in their inquiry, perhaps because of some unfortunate deficiency in their scientific training—generally use the causal concept loosely in the sense of "without proper justification," or "without precision." No doubt it is the case that causal judgments in history are often "loose" in these senses—a fact which has sometimes been represented as explaining the notorious reluctance of historians to admit that the particular causal judgments they make commit them to corresponding causal laws. But to argue from this that causal judgment in history does not imply determinism would not be very convincing. For the question we wish to answer is what the historian's causal statements *mean*, not whether, having made a causal judgment, he can usually

produce sufficient grounds for asserting it, including, perhaps, a relevant causal law. From the mere fact that historians are seldom happy about asserting such laws, it is difficult to derive anything of importance for our present inquiry. For it is plausible to argue that the historian's judgment is intellectually respectable precisely to the extent to which it *can* be defended by reference to a law—that is, precisely to the extent to which the assumption of determinism is given content.

There is a second, and philosophically more interesting, sense in which the causal judgments of historians might be said to be "loose," although I mention this, too, only to rule it out of consideration here. What I have in mind is the well-known fact that, although, according to the theory of determinism, for everything that occurs there must have been a set of sufficient conditions, what is actually called the cause, in the course of historical narrative, is never more than one or a few necessary conditions of what is said to be caused. Why some antecedent conditions are selected by historians, while others are not, is a question which has not yet been given all the attention it deserves from philosophers. The view which generally appears to be accepted is that the conditions selected as "causal" are those which can most conveniently be used to produce or prevent occurrences of the kind under study—although it is often difficult to see how such a criterion explains the causal judgments which historians actually make. What concerns us here, however, is simply the fact that such selection is made; for it might be argued that, since no one would claim that the conditions selected as causes are sufficient conditions of their effects, they cannot be said to determine their effects. As an attempt to find a logical cleavage between the concepts of causation and determinism in history, I think it is clear that such an argument does not take us far. For it is usually assumed by those who insist that causes are mere necessary conditions, that such causes invariably—even if we do not always know what they are—complete a set of sufficient conditions. And it is assumed that they could not be used to produce or prevent anything if the other necessary conditions of the effect were not forthcoming.

The analysis of "cause" as "a necessary condition of practical importance, which completes a set of sufficient conditions" was given classic expression by R. G. Collingwood in his brilliant discussion of the concept of causation in *An Essay on Metaphysics*. In view of the fact that contemporary philosophers often admit their indebtedness to Collingwood in this connection, and in view of the latter's eminence both as historian and as philosopher of history, it seems to me rather curious

that what has been, in this way, accepted so gratefully from him, has been confined to a point which Collingwood himself thought relevant only to our understanding of the concept of causation (he called it Sense II) as it is used, not in history, but in the practical sciences of nature.[6] By contrast, the analysis which he offered of what he regarded as the historian's own special sense of the term (he called it Sense I) appears to have been almost completely ignored. What I now propose to argue is that if the contrast which Collingwood draws between what he calls Sense I and Sense II is correct, the apparent clash of causal and indeterministic assumptions in the historian's study of human actions will be found to imply a connection between cause and effect which is "loose" in a way significantly different from either of those considered so far.

According to Collingwood, when we make causal judgments Sense II, "natural events are considered from a human point of view as events grouped in pairs, where one member in each pair, C, is immediately under human control."[7] Examples of such judgments would be: "the cause of books going mouldy is their being in a damp room; the cause of a man's sweating is a dose of aspirin. . . ."[8] In this sense of the term, what is caused is always a natural event, and what causes it is something that was, or could have been, either a human action or the result of one. By contrast, what is caused in Sense I of the concept is always "the free and deliberate act of a conscious and responsible agent."[9] It is in this sense, declares Collingwood, "that a solicitor's letter causes a man to pay a debt, or that bad weather causes him to return from an expedition."[10] Thus, if we read in the newspapers of the time, "Mr. Baldwin's speech causes adjournment of the House," and if we assume that the journalist's causal judgment is, as it should be, made in the standard historical sense, then we can immediately infer that "on hearing Mr. Baldwin's speech, the Speaker freely made up his mind to adjourn."[11]

If we can really make the latter inference, we must ask what we mean, then, by saying that the Speaker's action was "caused" by the speech. In Sense II, the connection between cause and effect is to be elucidated in terms of our discovery that by means of the cause we can manipulate or control the effect. What is the nature of the connection between an effect and its cause Sense I? Collingwood himself says that such causes provide human agents with motives for acting in the way we call their effects. Now "motive" is a difficult and perhaps equivocal term; but on the basis of the examples given, I think it would be legitimate to claim that the sense of the term envisaged here makes it equivalent to

"reason for acting." Having been given, by Baldwin's speech, a reason for adjourning the House, the Speaker therefore adjourns it; and if questioned later as to the cause of his action, it is this reason which he would doubtless produce in reply. We might say, therefore, that the connection between a cause Sense I and its effect is a rational one.

Now even if it is held (and this is quite debatable) that the admission that we sometimes act for the sake of a reason is compatible with the doctrine that all actions are determined, it seems to me quite impossible to claim that determinism is implied by the Speaker's causal report in this instance. The cause is certainly, in such a case, a condition which was necessary, in the sense that without it there would have been no reason for doing what the Speaker did. And if the Speaker's action is to be fully explained by reference to such a cause, taken in conjunction with certain other relevant considerations, we may also say that it must provide a sufficient reason for acting in the way he did. That there was such a cause, however, can surely not be taken to justify the conclusion that the agent could not have acted otherwise. For in this sense of "cause," it is (at least in part) up to the agent himself what the cause of his action shall be. A causal candidate will become effective, and hence become "the cause" of his action, only if the agent accepts it as his cause, if he makes it his cause. To put it another way, if an agent has cause to act, and acts accordingly, that cause may become the cause of his action. But we cannot, in advance, rule out the possibility that, whether out of perversity or stupidity, he will fail to act accordingly.

The sense in which the connection between cause and effect in such cases is "loose" should be clear in the light of these remarks. For if it does not follow that, because of what we will *ex post facto* call the cause of an action, the action will necessarily be performed, then the causal judgment does not imply that the action, if it is performed, is determined by its cause. The assumption of determinism can thus be dropped by the historian with a good conscience, and without the self-denying ordinance suggested by Professor Beard. For the belief that human actions are not determined need not restrict in any important way the causal analyses which it is the historian's proper business to carry out.

III

There will no doubt be those who, although they may agree with my claim that what a historian calls the cause of an action will often be what the agent regards as his reason for acting, will refuse to accept my

conclusion that in such cases the causal judgment is not deterministic. Since I must admit that there are some doubts in my mind as to whether Collingwood himself consistently maintained such a claim, let me try to elucidate my own thesis further by examining two difficulties which I find in Collingwood's discussion of cause Sense I.

The first arises out of his response to the implicit question what constitutes a *complete* cause Sense I? When this question arises with respect to cause Sense II, Collingwood is careful to insist that, although for its operation such a cause requires certain *conditiones sine quibus non*, and thus could be called covertly deterministic, nevertheless it is a mistake to regard such additional conditions as forming part of the cause. For it is the essence of a causal judgment Sense II that it should single out a condition of practical importance. If the other necessary conditions of the effect are incorporated into the cause, we get an overtly deterministic sense which Collingwood refers to as Sense III—and which, in spite of the fact that Hume and others have centred their attention on it, he regards as a philosopher's invention of dubious validity and no practical importance.

Now if we turn our attention to causes Sense I, it would seem reasonable to expect a similar analysis. It is obvious, for instance, that Mr. Baldwin's speech, even if it is quite properly selected by the historian as *the* cause of the Speaker's dissolution of the House, is selected from a number of antecedent conditions, of which many others—if only the fact that the House was sitting—were relevant to the Speaker's decision to act. In order to understand why such a speech provided the Speaker with a reason or motive to act, we should thus, as in the case of causes Sense II, have to make many other "considerations" for granted. The question arises, then, whether, if what we take for granted were made explicit, the connection between the cause (plus the other conditions) and the effect would not become as tight, and thus as deterministic, as a cause Sense III. I must admit that the conclusion that it would finds some justification in what Collingwood actually says.

Thus, in amplifying his definition of the historical sense, he tells us:

> A cause in Sense I is made up of two elements, a *causa quod* or efficient cause and a *causa ut* or final cause. The *causa quod* is a situation or state of things existing; the *causa ut* is a purpose or state of things to be brought about. Neither of these could be a cause if the other were absent.[12]

If Collingwood had left it at that, perhaps our present problem would not have arisen; for it might be argued that even when all such "con-

siderations" have been specified, they necessitate the agent's doing what he did only in a non-deterministic or rational sense, which allows us to say that he might have done otherwise. But Collingwood goes on to add that "the *causa ut* is not a mere desire or wish, it is an intention"; it is not just the agent's "wanting to act that way, but his *meaning* to act that way" (my italics). Such a remark I can only attribute to an unnoticed and inconsistent hankering, on Collingwood's part, after the tightness of a cause Sense III: a hankering which brings the whole analysis of cause Sense I into confusion at this point. For if by "intention" Collingwood means something like "executive decision to act at the time of acting," then the agent's intention cannot be part of the cause Sense I. It cannot be this for the very good reason that it is part of the effect. Causes in this sense, it must be remembered, are represented as explaining *actions*; and as Collingwood himself insists in *The Idea of History* (p. 213), actions have an "inside" as well as an "outside": a movement is not an action at all unless the agent intends to move. But if, on the other hand, "intention" is to mean something less than this—for example, something to be explained by contrasting a genuine purpose with an idle wish—then the connection between effect and cause Sense I is no longer tight. For the purpose which is the cause, rather than a part, of the action is one which the agent must *choose* to implement.

Once this point is clarified, I see no need to allow that it is implied by a causal judgment Sense I that what an agent did was, in principle, predictable from the cause of his action, in conjunction with any set of antecedent conditions which excludes his executive decision to act. But there is a second feature of Collingwood's discussion which may seem to cast doubt upon my claim that this is what he himself maintained. For Collingwood seems to me to place undue and misleading emphasis on cases in which the person making the causal judgment causes *someone else* to act by affording him a motive for doing so—the judgment of Mr. Baldwin, for example, that his speech caused the Speaker to adjourn the House. Thus at one point we are told that the experience from which our concept of cause Sense I is derived is our experience of "social life"—"the practical relations of man to man."[13] And again, in explaining why he calls Sense I the "historical" sense, Collingwood says that it is "because it refers to a type of case in which *both* cause and effect are human activities such as form the subject matter of history"[14] (my italics). The impression we might get (although I think quite wrongly) from such remarks is that, in terms of experience, the meaning-content of causal judgments Sense I is to be found in those situations in which

we find we can manipulate, not natural events, but our fellow men. And to say this comes very close to reducing Sense I to the covertly deterministic Sense II—the only difference being between what sort of thing is said to be caused in each case. Since the connection between causes and effects in both senses would then be of the same non-rational (that is, experimental) type, the difference of subject-matter would appear to be of no theoretical interest.

That Collingwood did *not* think that Sense I is in any such way reducible to Sense II is quite clearly asserted in the course of his discussion. And his offering, as an illustration of Sense I, the example, "bad weather causes a man to return from an expedition," would seem to show that, for him, it is accidental, and not essential, that in Sense I of the concept, the cause, as well as the effect, should be a human action. If we are to discover the essential meaning of Sense I, I suggest that we concentrate our attention on cases where the cause is not itself an action; for it is in those cases that it becomes clear that Sense I is an agent's self-applied concept of causation: it is an idea which can be ostensively defined only from the standpoint of a person whose action *is caused*, not from that of someone who *causes* it. As I have already tried to show, the meaning of a causal judgment Sense I is to be found in the experience of an agent who finds cause to act. If an observer or a manipulator claims to know what the cause of such an action was, what he means, as opposed to what he himself experiences, will be something which he has experienced in cases where he was himself an agent—and which he believes himself justified in attributing to other agents in so far as he can, in imagination, put himself at their standpoints.

It has been a commonplace since Hume that we cannot experience the element of necessity in the causal relation between two physical objects or events. In one of the few references to Collingwood's discussion of cause Sense I which I have found, Professor A. J. Ayer has argued that, in the case of a man whose action is caused in this sense, we are equally at loss to explain what we mean by saying that a causal judgment asserts a necessary connection between cause and effect.[15] But Ayer's argument can only be valid, it seems to me, if we follow him in regarding causation as exclusively an observer's or a manipulator's concept. For the agent whose action is caused *can* experience the necessity of the cause—the necessity of acting for the sake of a reason—although doubtless this is not the sort of necessity that Ayer, or any modern Humian, would wish to find. For it is clearly not the kind which determinists would attribute to what falls under a true law of nature.

IV

I have considered and rejected the suggestion that cause Sense I might be reducible to cause Sense II or Sense III. It was Collingwood's own doctrine, of course, that the sense of the concept employed in historical studies is not only independent and clearly understood, but is, in fact, the one from which the allegedly scientific sense or senses—which he does not think clear at all—are themselves derived by analogy. On such an account, the difficulties encountered by such philosophers as Hume and Russell, in their attempt to explain what we mean by causation in nature, are traceable to the inevitable carry-over of meaning, derived from our experience as agents, into a context which for most of us nowadays appears inappropriate. Thus cause Sense II, according to Collingwood, not only is a concept the use of which presupposes "the point of view of a practical agent, anxious to find out how he can manipulate nature for the achieving of his own ends," but also involves the idea that "man's manipulation of nature resembles one man's manipulation of another man, because natural things are alive in much the same way that men are alive. . . ."[16] Similarly, when, in Sense III, we judge that it was the impact of one billiard ball on another which caused the second to move, we imply that "a billiard ball struck by another and set in motion would have liked to be left in peace. . . ."[17] For how else can we explain the distinction which we wish to draw between our concepts of causation and of mere Humian constant conjunction?

There are, of course, many philosophers who would agree with Collingwood that the concept of causation, as it stands, has not only anthropocentric but also anthropomorphic implications of this sort. And many of them would doubtless argue that, since these implications are unacceptable for the purpose of scientific inquiry, what we must do is either strip the concept of them, or extrude the concept itself from the language of science—a course which was advocated, for example, by Bertrand Russell. Since history, at any rate in some sense, aims at being "scientific," it may be tempting for philosophers of history to assume that, for historical inquiry, a similar conceptual moral should be drawn. I should like to suggest that, whether or not the anthropomorphic implications of the causal concept justify its rejection in natural science, it is clearly a mistake to urge that these same implications render it unfit for the task of interpreting, not natural events, but human actions. Should we not ask, rather, how we do use the concept of causation in exclusively

human contexts—those contexts which Collingwood thought to require a special historical sense? And should we not do this without assuming beforehand that the historian's concept will turn out to be simply a variant—and probably an inferior, rather sloppy variant—of a concept which already has a clear and independent meaning in the interpretation of nature?

NOTES

1 *Theory and Practice in Historical Study* (Social Science Research Council Bulletin No. 54) (New York, 1946), 137.

2 The thesis was presented in a paper read before the Metaphysical Society of America, at Brown University, March 29, 1958.

3 For a recent survey of such views, and a position similar to the one adopted below, see M. Cranston, *Freedom: A New Analysis* (London, 1953), Part III.

4 See, for example, R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford, 1946), especially Part V.

5 The argument of this section develops the position maintained in my "Historical Understanding as Re-thinking," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, XXVII (Jan. 1958), 210.

6 R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Oxford, 1940), chaps. XXX–XXXI.

7 *Ibid.*, 286.

8 *Ibid.*, 299.

9 *Ibid.*, 285.

10 *Ibid.*, 290.

11 It might perhaps be pointed out that if Collingwood means that the Speaker decided freely in the sense that his decision was not *forced* by the speech, then we can scarcely make the inference in question until we know the tenor of the speech itself. But if, as I interpret it above, it is Collingwood's claim that we can infer that a decision caused by a speech will have been an exercise of free will (rather than free in the sense of "not compelled"), then it must be admitted that the claim goes beyond the conclusion argued for in the present paper in a different way. It is argued above that, when concerned with an action, in the full sense of the term, a causal judgment does not entail a deterministic relation between cause and effect. It appears to be Collingwood's thesis here (and it is a tempting one) that such a causal judgment actually entails an indeterministic relation.

12 Collingwood, *Essay on Metaphysics*, 292–3.

13 *Ibid.*, 309.

14 *Ibid.*, 286.

15 A. J. Ayer, *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge* (London, 1947), 195.

16 Collingwood, *Essay on Metaphysics*, 310–11.

17 *Ibid.*, 326.

MILTON'S ABSTRACT MUSIC

Albert Cook

The poets of the recent past have often wanted their personal rhythms to resemble the spoken language, or a prose not too far from cultivated speech. The bias if strong enough can lead to the rejection of blank verse itself as improper to American English. But one need not go so far as William Carlos Williams in pleading for the primacy of speech in a personal voice in order to feel cool towards Milton, whose verse is easily recognized as based on some personal rhythm quite remote from speech (or so he may seem to us; to Dr. Johnson, Milton's blank verse was too close to the spoken language, verse for the eye). Milton's imperious lulling of diction and syntax towards Latin has been pondered and assessed; since sound and sense wed indissolubly in a poem, we should expect to find, fusing Milton's invented sense, some general harmonics of sound beyond Bridges' discrimination of his syllabic laws or Arnold Stein's subtle analysis of tone colour in *Paradise Lost*.

A speaking voice will give varying emphasis to the accents of verse, and an accomplished poet will orchestrate these variations:

> It is the *cause*, it is the *cause*, my *soul*; . . .

The second "cause," rising against Othello's attempt to stifle it by logically needless repetition, will be emphasized over the first "cause," as both over "soul," though these three accents stand out against (and gain firmness by contrast with) the indecision in the hovering accent on the first "it" and the second "is."

The dramatic setting of this line, and the mastery of Shakespeare, enlivens the play among these accents beyond the pattern of the metre, in which all the accents are theoretically equivalent (or at least patterned more regularly than speech rhythms allow). Yet normally, in fact almost always, one can distinguish one major accent, and often three "more important" accents, in a line of verse:

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Bare *ruin'd* choirs where late the sweet birds sang. . . .
[Possibly "bare" or "choirs," depending on interpretation.]

Thoughts that do often lie too *deep* for tears. . . .

Or suck'd on *coun*try pleasures, childishly. . . .

Like a patient *e*therized upon a table. . . .

In the gloom the gold *ga*thers the light against it. . . .
[Possibly "against," or even "gloom."]

It is a great mark of Milton's rhythm that, contrary to the practice of almost any other verse writers in English, including his own imitators in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Milton carries his verse so far away from speech that one can seldom find in *Paradise Lost* a line where only three of the accents stand out over the other two, and never, I believe, a line in which one can distinguish a single major accent alone.

Who first se*duc'd* them to that *fowl* re*volt*?
The in*fer*nal *Ser*pent; *he* it was, whose *guile*
Stird up with *En*vy and Re*venge*, de*ceiv'd*
The *Mo*ther of Man*kinde*, what time his *Pride*
Had *cast* him *out* from *Heav'n*, with *all* his *Host*
Of *Re*bel *An*gels, by whose aid a*spir*ing
To *set* him*self* in *Glo*ry a*bove* his *Peers*,
He *trus*ted to have *e*qual'd the *most High*,
If he op*pos'd*; and with am*bi*tious *aim*
A*gainst* the *Throne* and *Mon*archy of *God*
Rais'd *im*pious *War* in *Heav'n* and *Bat*tle *proud*
With *vain* at*tempt*. *Him* the Al*mighty Pow*er
*Hurld head*long *flam*ing from th' E*ther*eal *Skie*
With *hi*deous *ruine* and com*bus*tion *down*
To *bot*tomless per*di*tion, *there* to *dwell*
In Ada*man*tine *Chains* and *pe*nal *Fire*
Who *durst* de*fie* th' Om*ni*potent to *Arms*.

If sense is necessarily the guide to the major accents, a single word cannot here be settled on as definitely more prominent in stress than the others. Even allowing latitude of interpretation for more usual poems, primacy is still assigned to a single accent at the expense of others: if one argues that the first "cause" receives most stress in the line from *Othello*, then the second receives less; if one argues that they both receive the same, a persuasive interpretation, the line is given a strikingly abnormal reading, and "soul" is still put into the background —unless one assigns it primacy; but all three cannot have equal value here—and this is precisely the way we must read the lines of *Paradise Lost*.

As we inspect the sense of the first line, "who" calls for stress because of the magnitude of the question; "first" because of the tremendous action initiated here, the subject of the poem, "Of Man's *first* disobedience"; "seduc'd" because of the fantastic treachery involved; "fowl" because of the enormity of the act; "revolt" because of the all-embracing nature of what the sin was directed against. The sense of the line seems simultaneously to concentrate in almost each accented word, and so on through this quotation as I have marked it, and on through the poem. This passage, in fact, illustrates rather more normal latitude of accent than is to be found in the prayers and invocations of the poem, which present nearly unbroken series of five major accents to the line. The voice to read this poetry must almost never flag in soaring, however it modulates: a strong-ribbed structure of accents constantly buoys up line by line the mighty periods.

The rhythmic effect which Milton gains by assigning all his accents nearly equal value is unusually special, as compared, for example, with French verse. In that convention the accents have an equality not of prominence, as in Milton, but of uninsistence. While Milton achieves a strenuous personal rhythm which heightens each of the individual accented syllables over the unaccented, the French convention tends to level the difference between accented and unaccented syllables, giving the whole poem line by line a rhythm that subdues the sense to wear its convention like a uniform. A similar effect is to be found in Italian poetry, even that which Milton imitated, as F. T. Prince points out (*The Italian Element in Milton's Verse*), in seeking a Virgilian grandiosity and *durezza*. Accents are levelled, not heightened, too, in the English verse of Chaucer, which echoes French conventions:

> Your ÿen two wol slee me sodenly;
> I may the beautee of hem not sustene,
> So woundeth hit thourghout my herte kene.

Spenser, also, in his equality of accent, resembles an Italian and French limpidity more than the Miltonic grandeur:

> A gentle knight was pricking on the plaine,
> Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
> Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
> The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde;
> Yet armes till that time did he never wield
> His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
> As much disdayning to the curbe to yielde:
> Full jolly knight he seemes, and faire did sitt,
> As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

No sooner have we stepped within the faerie forest, than all designations exist on the same allegorical level; and as the concrete stands throughout in a one-to-one relation to the abstract, so Spenser's syllabic convention operates to keep each word of the sentence, and here each line of the stanza too, patterned to an identical and formal emphasis. Even the rhythm has the two-dimensionality of the sort of mediaeval tapestry to which *The Faerie Queene* has often been compared.

Milton began with Spenser, and began by going beyond Spenser; we find an allegorical pattern in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* stated at the beginning of each poem and violated by the main contrasts between light and dark almost as soon as the broken, tuning-up rhythms of each poem's introduction have been toned off to the prevailing tetrameter line. *Paradise Lost* sets a poetic problem more simple in its generality than that of Spenser's epic and more directly spiritual—Man instead of twelve virtues; angels and devils instead of maids, giants, and castles. And the poem enunciates more thoroughly a literal but unknowable truth; given Spenser's conception detail may be proliferated on a relatively simple principle, but Milton must at every point solve anew the problem of representing the unfallen Adam of Genesis through a fallen imagination.

The uniqueness of Milton's rhythm—what Eliot calls "the peculiar feeling, almost a physical sensation of a breathless leap, communicated by Milton's long periods, and by his alone"—derives from what it expresses, an imaginative conception which creates an equivalence among the verbal terms and their accents which the terms may not rest back on, as Spenser's are allowed to do by the syllabic norms and by his conception. In *Paradise Lost*, every accented word stands out when spoken as the major one in the line, pulling against the rise of the accents, equally strong, which precede and follow. This creates a kind of tension analogous to the conflict of physical forces found in the structure of a baroque dome, whose mathematics, Siegfried Giedion tells us, introduces a new complexity of interrelated forces into architecture. Or, as Milton says in another connection:

> As in an Organ from one blast of wind
> To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breathes.

(We remember that the baroque period is also the high point for that instrument in church music.)

Thus Adam may be general Man (which his name, Milton was aware, means in Hebrew) by virtue of inhabiting a world where everything concrete, in the Garden and elsewhere, can be at once abstract

and irrevocably concrete; where every aspect of speech and idea gains importance without suppressing the importance of another, just as angels gain rather than lose (as Satan wrongly thought) by the pre-eminence of the Son in Heaven. A rhythmic provisionality—the accent is major only while spoken—governs this mortal representation of "things invisible to mortal sight." And just so a rhythmic assertion—the accent is major while it occurs—governs the poetic union which attempts "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." We may note, in fact, that the "things" are unattempted even by the inspired, and superior (Milton would surely say), prose of Genesis, because Scripture, in being inspired by the Holy Ghost, does not have to work within the limit of a fallen imagination. Milton expresses this limit, I believe, by his doubling of Urania, the classical muse, with the Holy Spirit, and by calling Moses a shepherd in the Theocritan as well as the New Testament sense. Moses is seen partly as such a shepherd, within the poem; and Milton, in not being a writer of Scripture but a poet following classical conventions, cannot help *as a poet* seeing the Holy Spirit partly through Urania.

The rhythms of *Paradise Lost* are simultaneously rapt with feeling and, as Arnold Stein says, "an integral part of the high, unwavering illusion of mystical motionlessness." We may inspect another passage to see how this rhythmic intussusception arrives at its "breathless leap" (Eliot) of "no middle flight" (Milton):

> Him th' Almighty Power
> Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
> With hideous ruine and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire
> Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.
> Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night
> To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
> Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
> Confounded though immortal.

"Now the first thing to notice," Rajan says of this passage, "is its preponderance of stock epithets. 'Hideous' does not limit the suggestions of 'ruine' and 'penal' does little to control our reaction to 'Fire'. Perdition has always been 'bottomless' and chains in poetry are usually 'Adamantine'. The associations of these words moreover are not developed but accumulated. 'Fire', 'Combustion', 'flaming' and in this context 'perdition' all suggest much the same thing and a similar grouping can be made of

'ethereal', 'down', 'bottomless', and 'headlong'." And Rajan goes on to notice that there is a repetition of *m* and *n* sounds, often in conjunction with *i* and *o*, which "convey irresistibly the terror of Satan's downfall." We might add that this "terror" which Rajan hears in the phonemes, the terror of the distance, the (plastic and infinite) measure of the fall, also gets into the tone of the poetry's sound through the strength of each primary accent, because these accents are not levelled off as in French, but are each successively primary. The headlong rush is the more precipitate for the dominance of the accent on "headlong" while the word is being spoken and the equally dominant accent on "ethereal," which, so to speak, keeps the sky aloft, tonally and geographically, and produces a kind of leaped gap of sound in which the word "flaming," equally accented, can blaze the more by being set, in wrenched sound as in visual image, against the "ethereal sky."

So Rajan's point about Milton's diction, that its terms tend to interfuse, "hideous" tending to complement "ruine" rather than limiting it (the way *modifiers* usually work), is reinforced by the similar action of the major accents in the sound, which give "hideous" and "ruine" the successive major emphasis. A particular poetic force, then, may be seen to reside in the famous Miltonic vagueness, noted perhaps first by Macaulay and berated by modern critics who value precision highly. Milton gives us not precision, but inter-echoing overtones, in sound and in sense. He does so because his poetic purposes are those not of precision—categorizing the attitudes of sin, repentance, and virtue like Dante, organizing the gestures of virtue and vice like Spenser—but of generality:

> Man's First Disobedience and the Fruit
> Of that Forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
> Brought Death into the World and all our woe.

Here the terms "Man," "Fruit," "Tree," etc., are given more generality even than allegory (though Milton allows himself to capitalize them for quasi-allegorical emphasis): allegory implies system, and system a specification of function which Milton's whole poetic effort in *Paradise Lost* is to avoid.

If we introduce Valéry's idea, that a poet in some sense invents the meanings of the words he uses, then we may see that Milton's inventions are strengthened by the privacy of his diction. The word in a poem gets its particular newness, or at least its freshness, by appearing in vivid conjunction with other words. Milton's practice operates, we may say, only to free the words from a prose limitation, to allow them to assert

their conjunction the more forcibly as a way of representing the plastic qualities of Man's theological experience.

In a world where God is known by analogies, "things invisible to mortal sight" must appear in a form mortal sight (physical and spiritual) can compass. God is Light, the invocation to Book III elaborates, and God (the Son) is a Word to such a degree that it is the Son, in the part of Book VII which puzzles some commentators, who goes forth as the agent of the Creation, presumably because the Creation is performed through Words ("Let there be light . . ."), and for God, Word is Act. There are for Milton the Word—Scripture—and words—those of his "private" language. To comment on Scripture in a poem is a perilous act, and a difficult one. One is following the Revealed with the fallen Imagination; therefore what one sees dazzles. The generality of light carries one over, but its generality is factitious; Adam imagined in a poem written by a post-lapsarian poet can be Man by the same sort of supposition that Moses can be spoken of as like Theocritus.

Milton's universe is as plastic as the sounds that describe it: a Dantesque diagram cannot be made of it. "First"—of disobedience or of parents—is used in the double sense of "original" and of "primal," and the elaborate voice is at once building the general (but lost) original situation, and regretting the lost (but always present) primal condition. The world itself is seen as a transmuted Eden; poetic analogies from the fallen world are used to portray the unfallen. It is in a description of the Garden that the famous simile is introduced about Proserpina, with its implied comparison to Eve:

> The Birds thir quire apply; aires, vernal aires,
> Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
> The trembling leaves, while Universal *Pan*
> Knit with the *Graces* and the *Hours* in dance
> Led on th'Eternal Spring. Not that faire field
> Of *Enna*, where *Proserpin* gathring flowrs
> Her self a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis
> Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain
> To seek her through the world; nor that sweet Grove
> Of *Daphne* by the *Orontes*, and th'inspir'd
> *Castalian* Spring might with this Paradise
> Of *Eden* strive; . . .

The simile is prepared for rhythmically by a pair of clauses just two lines long apiece, each introduced, as often in English and Latin verse, by a cadence somewhat shorter than those that follow. The effect of a cadenced rise between the short phrase and the longer ones is empha-

sized by the rhythmic connotation of the semicolon in the first line, which tends to hold the voice rather than stop it as a period would do; and also by the shorter rise from "aires" to "vernal aires" (itself a kind of delayed near-rhyme to "faire" in the first clause of the simile sentence) at the beginning of the first longer clause. In addition, there is an abrupt shift in tense from the present of the first clause, "attune," to the past of the second, "led," which trails the sense, with the voice, off, in letting the garden not hold its immediate present tense. (This is prepared for, also, by the participial phrases, the present of "breathing" and the past of "knit.")[1] Pan, then, in Adam's time and in the present of the poem, is at once factitious like the poem (Milton does not "believe in" the classical gods), and "universal," this word being but an expansion of the Greek meaning of Pan.

The voice quickens powerfully to pick up the beginning of the simile in the middle of the line, the more that it must leap the distance of the denial in "Not" (in which we also have perhaps the trope of preterition: to say the field is not so beautiful would be a way of hinting that in some sense it is). In this plastic world that Milton depicts, a part of the simile, Proserpina, moves to the centre and assumes some of the purport's freedom (the original comparison was of quality between a field and a grove). Proserpina's connection with Enna is rhythmically insisted on, by the strong enjambent from the line before, and by the major accent on each. She herself enforces the meaning, being compared to a flower with the same word—"fair"—which had governed the initial comparison of one garden to another. The world of the simile is allowed to expand and include Ceres' search, because the rhythm and the sense of the poem add a feeling of constant flight, in their breathless sound. This search is a constant simile for the conception of the poem and will always suggest the poetic comparison at the end of this passage, here that of the Castalian spring where the poet drank to be "inspir'd." We should note that "inspir'd" is the first end-word not a monosyllable since "Dis" (or, if "flowrs" may seem monosyllabic by being printed so, since "Pan"). Thus rhythmically we are made aware that it is by such a poem that we can imaginatively transcend "all that pain," our own being like Ceres'. It is but another line to the ending assonance of Paradise, expanding into its Hebrew equivalent (Eden, pleasant garden) in the next half-line, again through preterition ("nor . . . might . . . strive"). The loss implied, rhythmically, and also in sense, as Empson notes, by the word "all," is counterbalanced by this half line and is not as regretful as it would be if Milton had ended on "Paradise," with some such line

as: "Castalian Spring might match this Paradise." The whole passage—and the poem—is such a trope as we find in the word "inspired," applied by metonymy to the spring, when actually referring to the poet who drinks the spring: so, Milton implies, Eden is actualized in the poem, a poem as lofty in its "no middle flight" as the Castalian spring is at "high" Delphi against the crags of Parnassus. Moses is "inspired" by the Holy Ghost and writes truth about Eden; Milton is "inspired" to a poetic fiction that offers what of Eden can be approached by a fallen imagination.

The whole poem, in its sound, fuses the imaginative perception of Paradise with sorrow for its loss. The central idea and the language—which it took Milton so much of his lifetime to arrive at—create the forceful succession of major accents, the idiosyncratic tendency to generality and repetition in the diction, and the rhetorically "incoherent" expansiveness of the similes. These derive from the central insight of sound which Empson has attributed to the word "all" as a tonal equivalent for both the poem's cosmological scope and its *lacrimae rerum* (*Structure of Complex Words*, chap. IV):

> In a stylist, the word presumes economy of means; it raises the thing in hand absolutely without needing to list all the others. The sound rolls the tongue from back low (the inner man) to front high (throwing him out and upward), and the vowel is the "organ" note for which Milton is praised or the Virgilian moan at the sorrow inherent in the whole story.

Paradise Lost is "emotive" in Empson's terms; it is like music. And since its poetic idea of fallen humanity is a central abstraction, its music tends to be abstract in a way to be found only in Milton's work, and then only in *Paradise Lost* and the later sonnets.

II

Milton, at the beginning of his career, found uncongenial the logico-rhetorical, or metaphysical, style of the day, and some of his early efforts are notably clumsy or uncertain, in sound as in sense:

> This rich marble doth enterr
> The honour'd wife of *Winchester*,
> A Vicounts daughter, an Earls heir,
> Besides what her vertues fair
> Added to her noble birth,
> More than she could own from Earth.

The inept prosiness and the platitudes of this early attempt to write

in the vein of "obsequie," at which Donne was such a master, find here a rhythm uncertain to the point of brokenness, without even the spontaneity of doggerel. Soon Milton was to achieve a kind of abstract musical balance in the tetrameters of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, whose indeterminate mingling of light and dark as a sort of abstract antinomic image (in both poems, Cleanth Brooks points out) is matched by a syllabic indeterminacy between iamb and trochee, and by the nearly Spenserian tuning up rhythms of each poem's opening lines. Milton's father had been a musician, and it was to the accompaniment of music by Henry Lawes, his father's friend, that Milton early achieved a poetic consort for music in the masque *Comus*.

> Hence had the huntress Dian her dred bow
> Fair silver-shafted Queen for ever chaste,
> Wherwith she tam'd the brinded lioness
> And spotted mountain pard, but set at naught
> The frivolous bolt of Cupid, gods and men
> Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen oth' Woods.

The "chaste" effect of such lines, the "sober certainty of waking bliss," likened by Randall Jarrell (in a discussion that takes place in *Pictures from an Institution*) to the poetry of Hoelderlin, arises from the rhythm's confinement within an almost normal syllabic pattern (preserved by such contractions as the violent "oth' Woods"). This lies midway between the levelled accents of Spenser and the rising accents of *Paradise Lost*. A broidery of near rhyme and assonance (lioness/men; chaste/nought/woods; gods/dred/woods; huntress/lioness; feared/stern/frown) keeps a heightened charm of echo smoothly associating the sounds, almost asleep at their own beauty to such a degree that the argument can allow us the grace notes of "spotted" and "brindled," which are no part of the Elder Brother's reasoning here, if not indeed contradictory to it. But the sounds never quite go to sleep, and we can enjoy them through the protection of Chastity, to which heaven would stoop, the last lines tell us, "if Virtue feeble were"; we can thrill at the sound of "frivolous," which allows delight in the act of reproof, just as the argument of Comus expounds the beauties of the world in such a way as to allow them some measure of good (though brutish, I feel, in the rhythms of his speech). To this pure, abstract music, all things can be pure, and it need not decide between syllable and accent any more than it need reconcile classical gods with Christian.

The kind of reconcilement between the two which Milton will woo on such a magnificent scale in *Paradise Lost* (where accent buoys up

syllable as fallen classical fleshes out an imagined Eden) is first addressed in *Lycidas*. As music this poem is tuned perhaps too high for its theme; its achievement is carrying this off successfully—just as classical and Christian are allowed to conflict but are not reconciled, any more than grief and fame, Poetry and Church, are reconciled. Milton speaks of berries harsh and crude, of forced fingers rude, and there is no reason not to take him seriously. It may be a kind of sign of the proto-poetry he is writing here that he uses the nine unrhymed lines Ransom has strikingly noted. But, once written, *Lycidas* will not be repeated. There will be, he tells us at the end of this ambiguously autobiographical poem, "pastures new."

Milton had learned to create an artificial and high style, an abstract music as we have been calling it, partly through observing and writing classical hexameters on a quantitative pattern foreign, scholars tell us, even to Latin, and certainly to English; trying quantity in English was a mistake Milton, so far as we know, never made. He was to learn to rib his poems strongly with a simultaneity of sense from Hebrew poetry, which he read and translated during his long near-silence. Hebrew metres are based on parallelism of sense, a kind of logic foreign to Donne, and to anything else in English, Italian, and classical poetry. This logic, concentrated and simultaneous like that of the Prophets rather than successive, led Milton to the quite new achievements of the later sonnets. They ride over even the division of octave and sestet, these "Miltonic" sonnets as they are called, a form invented by Milton to express something quite new: a contribution of sense to the poem which the musical beauties of all his earlier work had lacked. The sonnets, are, however, spare as well as short. They go beyond, but have not incorporated the lushness of, *Lycidas* and *Comus*. We find the two—the strong ribs of simultaneous logic in the periods and accents of the sonnets and the nearly abstract musical lushness of the early poems—fused and transcended in *Paradise Lost*.

This was Milton's highest rhythmic achievement, but not his last. *Paradise Regained*, whose poetic and rhythmic excellence lies in an austerity barer even than that of the sonnets, proposes both a subject and a treatment more difficult than *Paradise Lost*: instead of Unfallen Man, the Man-God; and instead of a lofty treatment with an encyclopaedic range of imagery, a nearly bare presentation, in which the most mysterious side of the poem, the fact that the Man is God, is not allowed to be seen from the heavenly viewpoint, but is deduced from His human actions alone, as the Christ of the poem is said to have deduced His Divinity from His natural human intelligence. No longer the magnificent

Father of Lies, but a shady old man with a bundle of sticks on his back, the Devil is not even allowed the gamut of false reasons, mendacities, contradictions, and perversions with which his speeches in *Paradise Lost* always abound. The "darkness Visible" in this poem, and the light of heaven, are covered fires, fires which the rhythm, like the moderate language, keeps covered:

> He added not; and Satan bowing low
> His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
> Into thin Air diffus'd: for now began
> Night with her sullen wing to double-shade
> The Desert, Fowls in thir clay nests were couch't;
> And now wild Beasts came forth the woods to roam.

One cannot say of the rhythm that there are special major accents in the line (as in Shakespeare and most poetry), or that the major accents are levelled off in a syllabic pattern (as in Spenser, and in French poetry, for example), or that each accent becomes successively major as pronounced (as in *Paradise Lost*). The directness, or near prosiness, of the style, which acts as a severe limit on paragraph-long flights (and on elaborate metaphors), is brought to bear on the rhythm in such a way that the syllabic pattern keeps the accents from being pronounced, and the accents keep the syllabic pattern from being incantatory: very much as Christ is confined to His humanity, and is presented not in his positive glories (as is God in *Paradise Lost*), but in his opposition to Satan. Just as Christ withstands temptation, the accents of the poetry that assert his steadfastness have a stark strength in their rugged, prosy resistance to absorption into the uniform syllabic norm of the poem. One could call it Biblical rather than classical, as Christ in the poem rejects Pindar and all classical poetry for the Prophets. The effect—of accents, and yet no one accent being major—is, we have been saying, almost peculiar to Milton; but here the rhythm is carried into a more extreme form than in *Paradise Lost*, where an equivalence of major accents kept the flight aloft. Here the syllabic pattern is brought to bear as a strenuous check, or mute, to keep any accent from being heard as major, but not to subdue the accents, as a syllabic norm works in all other syllabic poetry.

In *Samson Agonistes* we meet metrical practices so radical that they have puzzled generations of commentators; Hopkins recognized in the poem the kind of tension between underlying pattern and individual accent which he called "sprung rhythm," but actually the sound pattern of the choruses in *Samson* does not allow quite so many accented (or unaccented) syllables to the foot, nor is its underlying norm so unambiguously regular as that in Hopkins' work. The blank verse of the

speeches in *Samson* rather resembles that of *Paradise Lost*, a heightened abstractness of successively major accents, except where the rhythms of the chorus invade the blank verse, which they do mostly in easy transitions from blank verse into some choral rhythm and occasionally in individual lines.

Samson is a kind of dramatic *tour de force* because the action of the drama—and action is central to a drama—turns on Samson's gradual attunement to the Divine Will. His decision to go with the Philistines, rather than to resist them, is both the peripety and the recognition in the play, and yet it is unprepared for, unmotivated, in the scenes with Manoah, Dalila, Harapha, and the officers. In fact, the effect of these dialogues is the opposite—to induce him to resist being taken to the festival of Dagon. The gradual stirring in Samson of the Divine Will is as inchoate, as indeterminate, as secret, as Christ's realization of His own Divinity, and His resistance to supreme temptation, in *Paradise Regained*. Milton's representation of this dramatic peripety not in the action but in the poetry of the play, and particularly in the rhythm, is a tremendous poetic feat. The rhythmic violence of Samson's despair is the beginning of this recognition;

> O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse
> Without all hope of day!

Here the strength of the equivalent major accents on each "dark" is matched by that of "blaze" and "noon"; but that strength is swallowed up in the long, liquid, hovering adverb "irrecoverably," in a line that has only four accents. It rounds out in the slow, measured, nearly spondaic third line. We always recognize metre by position, and thus must always read both backwards and forwards. So this third line may be read, in conjunction with the second line, as a sprung-rhythm four-beat line (like the second); or, in the blank verse, as a trochaic half-line, with the sadness of the half-lines in Virgil (which echoed in Milton's mind); finally, one may read it a third way, as the very first line in the poem looking ahead to the varying line lengths of the choruses.

Each of these three ways—the very fact that there are three—points to Samson's stirring. If it is read the first way, as a sprung, four-beat line, Samson is gathering his forces; the line is stronger than the dissolution of "irrecoverably" in the line before. If it is read the second way, as a Virgilian half-line, the silence at the end of it points to the stillness of Samson's own mind, to that which he cannot voice because he is as yet unaware of it (the Divine Will which he will later recognize). Read the

third way, as anticipating the choral measures, it echoes and sets the tone for both the humility which throughout characterizes the Chorus and the final triumph and joy of the choric passages which recount and formulate the sacrifice of Samson.

Milton has introduced a rhythmic indeterminacy—a sort of multiple possibility of reading which is not only functional, as it was in the iambic-trochaic indeterminacy of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (and as are certain effects which Donne achieves if we accept the sensitive reading of Arnold Stein), but also dramatic. Further, it carries the burden of the drama, a burden which is almost always carried by stage action. Milton tells us, however, that this poem, seemingly more dramatic than the performed *Comus*, "never was intended" for the stage.

This indeterminacy appears in the very first line spoken by the Chorus:

> SAMSON Thir daily practice to afflict me more.
> CHORUS This, this is he; softly a while,
> Let us not break in upon him;
> O change beyond report, thought, or belief!

The Chorus's first line read as echoing Samson's last would be a catalectic blank-verse line read in sprung rhythm (with accents on "this," "this," "he," "soft," and "while"). So read, each accent—each one successively major—is like a plea to be quiet, the voice raised in a whisper, out of consideration for Samson as the second line tells us. It is a still small voice which asks not to be heard against the strong, resigned complaint of Samson's final line here. But one may also—and simultaneously—read the line by referring it to the line ahead, in which case it follows not a blank-verse pattern (only), but the pattern of the Chorus's second line, a trochaic tetrameter line with reversal in the second foot. This reading, it might be said, emphasizes the dance, and thus the ritual function of the Chorus, because trochee is a singsongish dance measure. In this reading, the second "this" would go unaccented, as if, underlying the stark presence of Samson, requiring the astonishment of two *this*'s (accented with syncopation according to our first, blank-verse reading), there were an image of Samson doubling his presence—an accented "this"—with something internal and hidden, all but silent—and a "this" slurred and unaccented. The next line, too, can be taken as iambic pentameter or trochaic tetrameter—but this time the rhythmic reference is altered, almost carried forward, by the fact that we must read ahead, rather than backward, to get the iambic norm and backward, rather than ahead, to pick up the trochaic.

The rhythm always opens out for an indeterminacy of purpose—

which is a hope for Samson of internal and inspired change—by presenting rhythms not only chorally fluid—*Apolelymenon* or loosed is the Greek term Milton cites in his preface—but themselves so indeterminate as to allow of two or more simultaneous readings. This very indeterminacy permits Samson, as we have said, to voice, in his last appearance, the sudden and unmotivated decision, quiet as none of his previous statements have been, to accompany the Philistine officer—a decision he appropriately communicates to the Chorus rather than directly to the officer himself:

> Be of good courage, I begin to feel
> Some rouzing motions in me which dispose
> To something extraordinary my thoughts.

Here the rhythm is kept ordinary, in the convention of *Paradise Lost*, to allow the word "extraordinary" to carry accentually, and rhythmically, the whole burden of a decision which even at this point remains an indeterminacy, for "extraordinary" is still only an adjective modifying "something."

Rhythmic indeterminacy, having gloriously expressed so secret and divine a calling, appropriately accompanies the joy of the Chorus at the end:

> CHORUS Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
> Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more
> Then all thy life had slain before.
> SEMICHORUS While thir hearts were jocund and sublime,
> Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine,
> And fat regorged of Bulls and Goats.

The first line of the Semichorus can be read as a blank-verse line, and therefore an echo most immediately of the Messenger's narrative, detached and reflective. One can also read it as the more dance-like trochaic measure which is begun in the preceding line of the Chorus—"Then all thy life had slain before"—and carried forth, almost to a joyous tramp, in the unambiguous tetrameter—iambic but with trochaic effect due to its position—of "And fat regorged of Bulls and Goats." Taking this first line as trochaic, however, one is left with not only reversal, but an extra "sprung" syllable in "jocund and sublime."

This extra syllable permits a third reading, an anapestic one. (The position, I believe, will not allow for reading this line as dactylic tetrameter catalectic. The strong accent at the beginning is not the first beat of a dactyl but the syncopation of an anapest.) Anapests are more strongly

present in the next line, "Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine." The anapest is a dance measure like the trochee, but here, perhaps, more rollicking, a mockery of the jocundity of the Philistines which the anapestic rhythm mimes in order to transcend, as the religious joy of the true God transcends the merely earthly, gross joy of the drunken festival of Dagon. But the Chorus catches itself up into trochee again after only two feet—in "drunk with Wine." The whole line can also be read as a blank-verse line. The rhythms look back to reflectiveness (iamb), ahead to controlled joy (trochee), and can momentarily, without forgetting the other feelings present, rejoice in the very wildness of the enemy —but only with reference to the enemies' false devotion ("idolatry" is an anapest), not to the stimulant against which the Nazarite Samson has taken a lifelong vow ("Wine" is in trochee).

In some of these cases of indeterminacy, the accent varies with the reading ("this" in the previous quotation is unaccented by one reading, accented by another); but in other cases, the accentual pattern is the same ("jócŭnd ănd sŭblíme") and the pattern is different accordingly as to whether it is read back as trochee or ahead as anapest. But this does affect the movement: if "and" here would be an extra sprung syllable, it shows a strength and assertiveness of its own; if it is read as the last of an anapestic series, it slurs onward the way the wildness of the anapests is here felt to slur.

For several accentual patterns to be present at once, and to be felt as coiling ahead and backwards, is Milton's achievement in *Samson*, an achievement new for him as it is for us. Milton, like Shakespeare, followed heroically, in his employment of rhythms, not only the artistic requirement that he should find his own imaginative means—to such an extent that he went almost unread by even his better contemporaries —but also the more difficult principle of advancement with each work which Jean Cocteau states (but does not embody): "Learn what you can do as an artist, and then don't do it." In Milton's rhythms we find the work of a poet of greater range than even his present admirers, and his past imitators, have sometimes allowed.

NOTE

1 Lowry Nelson finds this shift in tense characteristic of what he and others call Baroque verse. "Góngora and Milton: Toward a Definition of the Baroque," *Comparative Literature* (1954), 53–63.

THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUND

T. Lennam

"Shakespeare is the happy hunting ground of all minds that have lost their balance." James Joyce, *Ulysses.*

Joyce's fascination for Shakespeare and his use of his work fuse in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of *Ulysses.*[1] In that section the Shakespearean parallels, allusions, echoes, and references are ordered into a pattern rich in detail, rare in texture, and weighted with symbolic complexity. Elucidation of the meaning of "Scylla and Charybdis," in relation to the work as a whole, has been the subject of several studies. This essay does not attempt to work that extremely fertile ground.[2] It is simply concerned with the structure of the episode and in particular with a structural pattern which has so far escaped notice.

Gathered in the office of the Chief Librarian of the National Library, Kildare Street, at 2 P.M. on the afternoon of June 16, 1904, are Thomas Lyster (the Director), William Kirkpartick Magee (Assistant Librarian), Richard Best (Assistant Librarian), George Russell (Poet and Mystic), and Stephen Dedalus (Schoolmaster). To his companions Stephen Dedalus propounds a theory concerning Shakespeare's life and its relationship to his works. The subject is of special interest to Stephen for two reasons: first, he considers Shakespeare an exemplum of creative genius, a rôle to which he himself aspires; and second, he feels that unravelling the facts of Shakespeare's life will provide evidence for his own aesthetic theory, especially the central place in it of the artist as creator.

Stephen's exposition, which is a series of dramatic and dubious revelations, artfully contrived and persuasively argued, is subject to a number of interruptions. Lyster comes and goes upon official duties; Russell discreetly withdraws, excusing himself on literary business; a newcomer, Malachi Mulligan, joins the company; and Leopold Bloom makes a fleeting appearance.

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By the afternoon of June 16, 1904, we have come to know a good deal about Stephen, Mulligan, and Bloom. Of Russell we have had only the briefest glimpse, as he emerged from the Vegetarian Restaurant a little after one o'clock, accompanied by an attentive woman, and wheeled his bicycle up the street, in all probability on his way to the library (163). The librarians, however, are fresh figures on the vast canvas of *Ulysses*.

Thomas W. Lyster, it seems, was a conscientious and efficient librarian, dedicated to the service of his profession and to Irish scholarship. He was, at this time, 49 years of age and had been the Director of the National Library since 1895. He has been described as "Dowden's most ardent disciple," and was apparently given to echoing his master with enthusiastic repetitiousness. This tedious pedantry coupled with only a rudimentary sense of humour made him rather a vulnerable figure.[3]

William Kirkpatrick Magee, better known under his pseudonym John Eglinton, joined the staff of the National Library in 1900. He had, by the time of this meeting, already made his mark as a subtle thinker, essayist, and critic. He was the editor of *Dana*, the magazine to which Stephen Dedalus hoped to contribute his article on Shakespeare, and the author of *Two Essays on The Remnant* (1894) and *Pebbles from a Brook* (1901), works which Stephen acknowledges having read. Although a contributor to the Irish Literary Revival, Eglinton was also one of its most stringent critics. He did not share Russell's confidence "in the regeneration of the Irish people by inducing 'spirituality' into their life," or the poet's enthusiasm for the Irish peasantry. "His chief concern was with the individual thinker, the man who forces himself to push aside facile solutions and popular dogmas in order to confront fundamental issues without a compromise."[4] Reticent, modest, and independent, and the possessor of a notable, if somewhat exclusive, literary reputation, John Eglinton is Stephen's chief opponent in the argument which follows.

The third librarian, Richard Irvine Best, was the youngest and newest member of the staff. He was later to make a reputation as a scholar in Celtic studies. He had already by 1903 brought out a translation of H. d'A. de Jubainville's *The Irish Mythological Cycle and Celtic Mythology*, the first of his many books which were to contribute to the Revival. In 1904, none the less, Best appeared to his contemporaries as a literary dilettante rather than a scholar. His enthusiasm for Wilde, his sartorial affectations, prim, mincing manner, and "beautiful shining hair and features so fine and delicate"[5]—all combined to give the impression of an aesthete and a fop.

To the three librarians and to Russell until he exits, Stephen expounds his theories on Shakespeare. The listeners' reactions are varied. Lyster is, between his departures and returns, politely curious; Best is enthusiastic and intrigued; Eglinton is sceptical and critical. Russell alone is uninterested. After registering a protest at "this prying into the family life of a great man" and scornfully suggesting that it is "interesting only to the parish clerk" (187), he excuses himself and leaves.

Although Stephen's remaining auditors are very willing to hear him out, he regards them with some hostility. Lyster's obsequious affability is observed by Stephen and recorded in his thought-stream with mocking emphasis. Best's youthful and effeminate appearance, his jejune aestheticism, and his verbal inanities are all sharply and contemptuously delineated. As for Eglinton, his keen and critical wit and his knowledge of Shakespeare very quickly distinguish him, in Stephen's mind, as the main opponent to whom he must address his theory.

All four listeners have two attributes in common which vex Stephen. They have already established, or, in the case of Best, begun to establish, a literary reputation. Further, they have all identified themselves, in one way or another, with the Irish Literary Renaissance, a movement which Stephen professes to despise and from which he has scornfully dissociated himself. Stephen uneasily faces his literary foes. Envious of their assured positions and their growing reputations, he masks his isolation and discontent with calculated arrogance and barbed hostility. In doing so, he once more assumes the rôle of Hamlet, whose predicament he has already identified with his own.

Both the Dedalus-Hamlet and the Bloom-Shakespeare parallels have been thoroughly explored: neither needs further treatment here. No one, so far as I know, however, has suggested that in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode some further identifications may be made with the characters of Shakespeare's plays. These are: Lyster with Polonius, Eglinton with Laertes, Best with Osric, and Russell with the Ghost. Mulligan, as I shall endeavour to show, plays the Fool.

The glimpses that we have of Russell are of a figure deep in shadow. His face is "bearded amid darkgreener shadow" (182). He "oracled out of his shadow" (183). He "rose from shadow" (189). At one point Stephen has a mock vision of Russell sitting cross-legged under an umbrel umbershoot ringed by disciples and communing with the spirit world, "hesouls, shesouls, shoals of souls. Engulfed with wailing creecries, whirled, whirling, they bewail" (189). Russell has little to contribute to the argument. When he does, his statement is "oracular." After one disapproving intervention of Russell's, Stephen repeats to

himself Hamlet's question put to the voice from the cellarage, "Art thou there truepenny?"[6] Like the Ghost in *Hamlet* Russell makes only a brief stay. Uninterested in Stephen's thesis, he takes his leave "more in sorrow than in anger," we may be sure. He gives his reason, "I am afraid I am due at the Homestead" (189), which, despite his phrasing, is perhaps not a very "fearful summons." Nevertheless he obeys it. Unveiling "his cooperative watch" he is as conscious of the hour as Hamlet's Ghost, which "faded at the crowing of a cock." It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Russell, when he next appears (in "Circe") does so as the ghost of Mananaan Maclir, clad in druidic mantle and mumbling with a "voice of the waves" (499).[7]

Thomas W. Lyster is the "Lord Chamberlain" of the National Library. Like the holder of the same office at Elsinore, he is a busy, affable, and earnest host. Lyster's frequent comings and goings throughout the episode are similar to Polonius' appearances and reappearances at Court, where domestic and official duties have claims upon him. Like Lyster, Polonius dances attendance, though to be sure, not with such a variety of movement. If a contemptuous remark of Hamlet's to the First Player is to be believed, Polonius is "for a jig and a tale of bawdry" rather than for the courtly steps Lyster performs. Lyster's zeal in the service of his profession was notable. Stephen observes him "zealous by the door" and "bald, most, zealous" (182). Polonius, too, is zealous—a characteristic, it would be true to say, partly responsible for his undoing. Besides diligence, Lyster shares another attribute with Polonius. His conspicuous ears were a prominent feature of his bald head and Stephen observes him "eared, assiduous" (188). His "friendly, earnest" disposition attended all who approached him with any request, however trivial. Polonius' counsel to Laertes, "give every man thy ear" and "Take each man's censure but reserve thy judgment," bespeaks his auditive attentiveness. That Polonius practises what he preaches is only too clear. The Chamberlain, assiduous and eared behind the arras, is fatally rewarded for this propensity. Another mutual feature is their volubility.[8] Stephen refers to Lyster as "voluble, dutiful" (198), and later as talking "with voluble pains of zeal, in duty bound, most fair, most kind" (198). This trait in Polonius is only too obvious and needs no emphasis. Hamlet sums him up in a succinct epitaph (Act III, scene 4, lines 213–16):

> Indeed this counsellor
> Is now most still, most secret and most grave,
> Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

It has already been noted that Lyster's younger contemporaries found

him ludicrous and tedious at times, and certainly Stephen's contempt for him is plain. Lyster opens the debate with some generalizations of Goethe about Shakespeare, the obviousness of which draws Stephen's sneering reference to "Monsieur de la Palisse" (182). Polonius is similarly the target of Hamlet's unconcealed scorn. "That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts" and "Thou wretched rash intruding fool" are sufficient evidence for it. Hamlet's view of Polonius the assiduous, prating, bore has much in common with Stephen's view of "the bald pink lollard costard, guiltless though maligned" (188) Director of the National Library.

"'Fore God, my lord, well-spoken, with good accent and good discretion," says Polonius approvingly of Hamlet's speaking of Aeneas' lines before the players at Elsinore (Act II, scene 2). Later Hamlet's advice to the players confirms Polonius' judgment. The Prince is an understanding and judicious critic with a penetrating insight into the players' art. That Hamlet is no mere theoretician but a talented mimic as well is demonstrated in an amusing scene in which he and Horatio are confronted by Osric (Act V, scene 2).[9] The fashionable "waterfly" in winged doublet and feathered cap, whose posturings and stilted language are mocked, is a butt for Hamlet's gift. In the "study" or "inner room" of the National Library, Stephen likewise confirms Malachi Mulligan's estimate of his histrionic talent, "O, you peerless mummer!" (197).[10]

Stephen, like Hamlet, has a subject for mockery at hand, Richard Irvine Best, the Assistant Librarian. Best parallels Osric in several ways. Both are young, both are foppish, and both possess irritating vocal and gesticulatory mannerisms. Best's youthfulness is emphasized. He is "young, mild, light" (184), "a blond ephebe" (196), and a "douce youngling" (213). Osric is similarly represented. "Enter young Osricke" (*Folio*, Act V, scene 2); "Give them the Foyles young Osricke" (*Folio*, Act V, scene 2); and "My Lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric" (Act V, scene 2). Osric's sartorial refinements have already been mentioned. Best, too, is a dandy. Stephen thinks, "You would give your five wits for youth's proud livery he pranks in" (196), and elsewhere describes Best as a "minion of pleasure" (213), and as the "well pleased pleaser" (189). Osric possesses a feathered bonnet and is much given to elegant displays of it, an affectation which draws Hamlet's scorn. Best enters the room carrying "with grace a notebook, new, large, clean and bright" (184). Later he is observed "raising his new book, gladly, brightly" (189), and "lifting his brilliant notebook" (196); finally "Mr. Best eagerlyquietly lifted his book" (208). Nor is

Best's free hand entirely idle. On one occasion Stephen watches him write tiny signs in the air" (185). These flourishes emulate Osric's perhaps more expansive gestures. At any rate they irritate Stephen, who observes to himself with contempt, "His private papers in the original" (192).

In no way are these two exquisites more alike than in their language. Osric's affected, ingratiating pomposity is neatly taken off by Hamlet. Upon the young courtier's departure, Horatio comments: "This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head." The Prince replies (Act V, scene 2, lines 193–202):

> He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Best's "tune of the time and outward habit of encounter" are, as Schutte has pointed out, the aesthetic movement headed by Pater and Wilde. Certainly he is an admirer of Wilde (196) and appears "to be trying hard to imitate Wilde's manner."[11] His contributions, however, are for the most part feeble, sometimes irrelevant, and often simply silly; truly a "yesty collection," words blown out "upon the topmost froth of thought." His irritating repetitive gestures are accompanied by equally irritating repetitive statements. He uses the phrase "don't you know" in this fashion, a habit which parallels Osric's "my lord," "good lord," "sweet lord" (Act V, scene 2).[12]

About midway in the discussion the tempo of Stephen's exposition increases as his narrative moves forward to a climax. The excitement is reflected in the librarians grouped around him. They are, at this moment, silent, attentively following the patterns of Stephen's argument as they emerge and cohere. Stephen is very conscious of the spell that he has cast and also of his own casuistry, "They list. And in the porches of their ears I pour" (194). He has still much ground to cover, further revelations to unfold, and more complex strands to weave into the brilliant fabric of his exposition. At this moment of dramatic climax he is interrupted, though, by an entrance; the tension is broken. What immediately follows is an *Entr'acte*—as Stephen at once recognizes (195)—which provides a natural diminution of tension, and which gives him a brief respite before the resumption of his argument. The interrupter and chief figure of this small scene is his friend and "enemy" (195) Malachi Mulligan, and he is playing the Fool—"Puck Mulligan" (210).[13]

It is for Mulligan a familiar rôle. He is here (as his dress and behaviour confirm) an "allowed" or "licensed" Fool. Stephen notes his "ribald face" (195), "his head wagging" (196), his "happy patch's smirk" (214). Mulligan is dressed and equipped appropriately, "blithe in motley" (195) and carrying a "bauble," his doffed Panama hat. Throughout the remainder of this episode Mulligan performs his part. Since he is a "licensed" Fool, his jests, jibes, and antics often have a sharp edge. He can "gag sweetly" (203) and also speak with "honeying malice"(211). He can chant a snatch of verse or be seen "footed featly, trilling" a lewd lyric (213). He is popular with them all, a gay, privileged, jesting figure likely to be, at any moment, quite outrageous. Puck Mulligan is irrepressible and Stephen thinks of him as "my whetstone" (208). Though Mulligan wears motley (his primrose waistcoat)[14] and for the most part plays the Fool, he does resort to traditional clowning. At the close of the episode, for instance, he proposes a lascivious jig, "Everyman His Own Wife" (214), which, as the full sub-title and cast suggest, promises to be as bawdy a tale as any.[15]

Before examining Stephen's remaining auditor and most formidable opponent, one should mention two other figures. These are Haines, who is referred to in two passages, and Bloom, who crosses the threshold "a patient silhouette," "a bowing dark figure."

The Englishman Haines had been at the library talking to Best a little before the discussion began. Best, on his arrival, explains to the assembled company that "he couldn't bring him [Haines] in to hear the discussion" and that he had gone to buy Hyde's *Love Songs of Connacht*. Earlier that morning Haines, while walking with Mulligan and Stephen, had shown more than a casual interest in Stephen's views on Hamlet. Indeed, he had admitted, "you pique my curiosity," and among other questions had asked, "Is it some paradox?" (19). Nor was this all. Haines had connected the Martello Tower and the Sandymount Cliffs with "Elsinore '*That beetles o'er his base into the sea.*' " Immediately following this statement Stephen has a moment of revelation: "In the bright silent instant Stephen saw his own image in cheap dusty mourning between their gay attires" (20). As Schutte points out, Stephen sees himself as Hamlet in mourning, flanked by Mulligan and Haines as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, each in gay attire. "Both are his enemies, though both pretend to be—and perhaps believe they are—his friends. Like Claudius' spies, Haines has been trying to pry out of his enigmatic friend what is in fact the secret of his life. Like them Haines is not adroit in his questioning; like them he fails; and like them he will not be present for the final self-exposure of the hero."[16]

The company in the inner room is more conscious of Bloom's presence. He is glimpsed by Stephen very briefly as he is attended by Lyster and conducted to the newspaper files. He does not, however, escape the Fool's characteristic scurrility (198). When Stephen and Mulligan leave the library, Bloom passes "between them bowing, greeting" (214). Bloom's relationship to Shakespeare within the symbolic framework of *Ulysses* has received extended treatment in other studies. Suffice it here to say that the appearance of the player Shakespeare, albeit in a very minor rôle, and as fleeting as a ghost's, is not inappropriate to the drama enacted in the "study."[17]

Once Stephen is launched upon the mainstream of his argument, he is quick to perceive that John Eglinton is his main antagonist. Lyster's conscientious attendance to library business precludes him from participating to any worth-while extent. As for Best, his contributions are limited to verbal antics, digressions, and self-displays. Stephen contemptuously records these and addresses himself seriously to Eglinton. It is with Eglinton that he duels. The thrust, parry, and counter-thrust of their debate is at times vigorous and sharp. Eglinton plays Laertes.

There are several parallels which suggest this identification. Stephen's attitude towards his opponent is ambivalent, a mixture of envy and respect. Stephen is envious of Eglinton's established and growing literary reputation and self-consciously aware that his own creative output is a mere "capfull of odes" and that he is no more than a "bullockbefriending bard." On the other hand, Eglinton's independence of mind and his critical attitude towards the excesses of the Irish Literary Renaissance are respected by Stephen. Stephen has read Eglinton's work with care enough to be able to quote it deftly. Hamlet's envy of Laertes is less easy to assert. Claudius, of course, confirms it, but then he is a poor witness (Act IV, scene 7, lines 103–6):

> Sir, this report of his
> Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
> That he could nothing do but wish and beg
> Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.

Nevertheless it cannot be entirely dismissed. As for the Prince's goodwill towards Laertes, does he not say (Act V, scene 2, lines 238–9),

> Give me your pardon, Sir: I've done you wrong;
> But pardon't, as you are a gentleman,

as earlier he had admitted to Horatio (lines 74–7),

> But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

> That to Laertes I forgot myself;
> For by the image of my cause, I see
> The portraiture of his.

Like Stephen, Hamlet feels that his antagonist holds his "follies hostage" (182). A wish to placate and make amends is present in both. Hamlet confides to Horatio, "I'll court his favour." Stephen courts Eglinton with a soothing reference to his published work (205), and thinks, "Flatter. Rarely. But Flatter."

The likeness between them is strengthened by the manner in which anger and bitterness are gradually modified. The sense of estrangement and suspicion gives place to a reconciliation. At the outset of the episode, a strong undercurrent of hostility flows between them. Stephen's observations of Eglinton are tinged with malice. He notes him "glittereyed" (182), his "carper's skull" (188), and (192) "the bane of miscreant eyes, glinting stern under wrinkled brows. A basilisk." As the discussion proceeds, hostile references such as these are modulated and then disappear. The glittering eyes which remind Stephen of a serpent are later associated with a pleasant memory of Charenton and the "old wall where sudden lizards flash" (200), just as "carper" and "mocker" become "steadfast John" (202). Nor is this shift of attitude evident merely in Stephen. Eglinton, like Laertes, is at first antagonistic and does not conceal his dislike. He twits Stephen's arrogance with "elder's gall" (182) and belittles Stephen's intention, "Like the Fat Boy in Pickwick he wants to make our flesh creep" (185). On one occasion his anger bubbles up, "Upon my word it makes my blood boil to hear anyone compare Aristotle with Plato" (184), a very Laertes-like outburst. Like Laertes who, after the duel, asks, "Exchange forgiveness with me noble Hamlet," Eglinton's early scorn and bitterness are replaced by a more sympathetic attitude towards Stephen's theory. Evidence for this gradual change of feeling is surely clinched when Eglinton, immediately before Stephen's concluding statement, exclaims, echoing Dumas, "After God Shakespeare created most" (210). This is precisely one of the basic themes Stephen has woven into his final and comprehensive summary.

There are also some interesting resemblances between the two duels. The weapons mentioned by Osric, when he delivers the challenge, are rapier and dagger. "Unsheathe your dagger definitions" (184), thinks Stephen, shortly before the argument assumes the cut and thrust of debate. As for the rapier or "foil," an unmistakable allusion to it is made, as we shall see in a moment.

Laertes and Hamlet fight only three of the intended dozen bouts before the fatal strokes are exchanged. At the conclusion of each bout,

two of which are in Hamlet's favour, the third being inconclusive, either Osric or Laertes acknowledges the outcome. Similarly, the verbal duel between Stephen and Eglinton has dialectical climaxes which appear to be the equivalent of these moments of triumph. The first of these, which follows a long struggle between the contestants in which Eglinton holds his own and manages to deliver some fine thrusts, is the citation by Stephen of the evidence contained in Shakespeare's will of the bequest of a second-best bed. Osric's statement, "A hit. A very palpable hit," is paralleled by Best's rather obvious affirmation, "It is clear that there were two beds, a best and a second best" (201). The second decisive moment occurs when Stephen "proves" that Shakespeare employed his own family situations in his plays. Eglinton does not challenge Stephen's bold assertions but merely assents. "The plot thickens" (206), thereby allowing Stephen the point. The final and inconclusive bout follows. Stephen extends the identification of Shakespeare's brothers, Richard and Edmund, with Shakespearean villains and speciously throws in the evidence of the "firedrake," knowing it to be false. At this moment Stephen appears to be victorious. He notes his auditors, "Both satisfied" (207). However, Eglinton then comments, "Your own name is strange enough. I suppose it explains your fantastical humour" (208). It is a telling riposte. Stephen's confidence ebbs as the train of his thought leads him to consider the "Fabulous Artificer" and the ignominious reality of his own failure at flight. Far from being a Daedalus, the hawk-like man, he sees himself as Icarus, the lapwing. Of this climax "Nothing neither way" is apt judgment.

The duel then enters its final phase. It is set off by a striking allusion (208), "John Eglinton touched the foil.[18]—Come, he said, Let us hear what you have to say of Richard and Edmund. You kept them for the last, didn't you?" It was after the third bout that Laertes made his fatal thrust with the "bated" foil. Eglinton's challenging "come" echoes the conventional duelling term which both Hamlet and Laertes use before attacking.

The *Hamlet* identifications in the "Scylla and Charybdis" indicated above might appear, at first glance, to add a gratuitous complexity to the structure of the episode. Joyce has, however, merely extended a process begun in "Telemachus," where the Stephen-Hamlet parallel is first suggested. This extension is not only artistically appropriate, but also quite logical. As Philip Toynbee has observed, the Hamlet theme "is architectural rather than musical for its reappearances are not so much evocative as constructional."[19] By correlating suggestively rather than in detail the figures of the librarians, AE, and Gogarty with Shakespeare's characters,

Joyce has succeeded in intensifying and dramatizing Stephen's general predicament, that of his isolation from his environment. This episode dramatically illustrates his intellectual dislocation from contemporaries whose literary and artistic interests, far from forming a sympathetic bond, appear wholly alien to his own. Further, the frequency of the verbal echoes of *Hamlet* together with the visual effect of the advertisement playbill mentioned by Best (185)—

HAMLET

ou

LE DISTRAIT

Pièce de Shakespeare

—reinforce the suggestion that Joyce, in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode, intended to keep Shakespeare's play in the forefront of his over-all design.

Another aspect of the structure of this episode illuminates Joyce's characterization. The technique that Joyce employs here, as elsewhere in *Ulysses*, is one of significant correspondences. By correlating the real-life persons in the National Library with the creations of Shakespeare's imagination, Joyce presents us with vivid recreations which are the result of a controlled balance of fact and fiction. Thus Ellmann's interpretation of the sketch of Dr. Richard Best as the product of Joyce's "pique at Best's refusal to lend him money in Dublin"[20] is unacceptable without qualification. As we have seen, the portrait of Best is justified by its artistic purpose and does not simply spring from an emotional state. Stanislaus Joyce has said of his brother, "Justice towards the characters of his own creation, or imaginative recreation, became an artistic principle with him."[21]

NOTES

1 References to *Ulysses* (New York: Modern Library, 1946) are by page number enclosed in parenthesis. References to *Hamlet* are from The Globe Edition (London: Macmillan, 1956) unless otherwise stated.

2 William M. Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare: A Study in the Meaning of Ulysses* (New Haven, 1957), is the most thorough and I am much indebted to it. I should like to acknowledge also the helpful discussion and criticism of Dr. J. K. Johnstone.

3 See Stephen Gwynn, *Experiences of a Literary Man* (New York, 1926),

64–5. For this and sketches of the other Librarians see Mary and Padraic Colum, *Our Friend James Joyce* (New York, 1958), 28–34; also Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare*, chap. III.

4 Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare*, 42–4.

5 George Moore, *Salve*, 232, cited by Schutte, 37.

6 Calvin Edwards, in "The Hamlet Motif in Joyce's *Ulysses*," *Western Review*, XV (1950), mistakenly takes this as a reference to Bloom hovering outside the room.

7 Oliver St. J. Gogarty, in *As I was Going Down Sackville Street* (London, 1937), 283, records AE's appearance as the ghost in his own play *Deirdre*: "The golden-brown beard and full, fresh-cheeked face appeared. A sonorous voice chanted one long name: 'Mananann Mac Lir.' It was the author, AE! Shakespeare is said to have played the ghost in 'Hamlet' because he had a fine voice. AE's only appearance on the stage was a partial appearance, the head of the God of the Waves of Erin, Mananann, the Son of Lir."

8 Gogarty, *As I was Going Down Sackville Street*, 8–16 gives an example of this characteristic of Lyster; see also Colum, *Our Friend James Joyce*, 30.

9 See Dover Wilson's discussion of Osric's dress in the New Cambridge edition of *Hamlet* (1941), Notes, 243–5.

10 See also p. 7, "Kinch, the loveliest mummer of them all," and p. 213, "Mournfull mummer, Buck Mulligan moaned."

11 Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare*, 37.

12 Schutte notes that Best uses this phrase no less than 14 times, 38. Osric's varied salutations number 18 in this small scene.

13 See Schutte, chap. II, for discussion of Mulligan as Claudius.

14 In "Circe" Mulligan appears "in particoloured jester's dress of puce and yellow and clown's cap with curling bell . . . a smoking buttered scone in his hand" (565).

15 The theatrical jig was a lyrical farce, written in rhyme and sung and danced to ballad measure, traditionally executed by the clown as an afterpiece to a play.

16 Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare*, 20.

17 Patricia Hutchins, *James Joyce's Dublin* (London, 1950), 77, notes, "The 'discreet vaulted cell' where the discussion in *Ulysses* takes place, may have been based on the room used by Mr. Lyster, 'John Eglinton' and Dr. Best which lies behind the counter and was only lit by a roof light at the time."

18 I am not sure what it is Eglinton touched. It might be something to do with the lamp, a foil reflector, or perhaps a counterfoil lying on the desk. In a letter to me Dr. R. J. Hayes, the Director of the National Library, writes, "the word 'foil' is not used in the National Library," and suggests, "that 'foil' in this context is the reader's docket handed in by the attendant for the item which Fr. Dinneen (Dineen) required."

19 Seon Givens, ed., "A Study of James Joyce," *James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism* (New York, 1948), 257; see also William Peery, "The Hamlet of Stephen Dedalus," *University of Texas Studies in English*, XXXI (1952), 119.

20 Richard Ellmann, "The Backgrounds of Ulysses," *The Kenyon Review*, XVI (1954), 337–8.

21 Richard Ellmann, ed., *My Brother's Keeper* (London, 1958), 87.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Courtiers, Writers, and Sages

During that All-Hallown summer of pre-Civil War England, in 1632, the artists Stalbempt and Belcamp painted a "conversation piece" showing Charles I and his court in the park at Greenwich. This picture, reproduced in Gervas Huxley's *Endymion Porter: The Life of a Courtier* (London: Chatto & Windus [Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited], 1959, pp. 344, $5.50), shows the royal trio—King, Queen, and tiny Prince Charles—in stately miniature upon a gentle pastoral slope, surrounded by courtly councillors, Hamilton, Weston, Arundel—and Endymion Porter, courtier, patron of poets, cultural plenipotentiary to the royal connoisseur, gross and graceful in white satin, leaning, like the other gentlemen, upon a sword-stick soon to bend before the ironsides. It is all charming, this filigree of conciliar elegance, the hieroglyph of a doomed order in which civil forms, imitating art, died of their own inane incompetence and perished in pathetic splendour, in forlorn cavalry charges over soggy fields, in bright jewels huddled hastily in leathern wallets, and night passages over the narrow seas.

Mr. Huxley tells a plain unvarnished story; reproof or nostalgia is not in his line (he is, after all, the social historian of tea), but his subject, even if a plain man in his way, is a symbolic figure too. His name in baptism, Endymion—how appropriate for one who played his rôle in Prince Charles's fantastic courtship of the Infanta Maria Anna in 1623, hovered in the periphery of the ritual of Platonic love cultivated at the court of Charles, and wrote realms of explanatory and passionate correspondence to his lunar and jealous wife Olive. A sad shepherd, his vast expenses met by grants and monopolies of the kind which enraged the parliamentary reformers, his loyal and useful function destroyed in revolution, the pictures he had bought sold again abroad, he died and with him a whole era of elegant artifice, during which a significant proportion of the English gentry was indelibly civilized, wedded by couplets, canvases, and marbles to the Europe which their Protestant grandfathers had with insular piety rejected.

Porter had a seat at Suckling's "Sessions of the Poets," and was the patron of Thomas May and the lord of William D'Avenant's muse and heart, as that grandiloquent cavalier expressed it. Half a century before, the young Spenser, ambitious and already touched by a melancholy first conventional and later constitutional, had observed bitterly:

> But ah Mecoenas is yclad in claye,
> And great Augustus long ygoe is dead:

> And all the worthies liggen wrapt in leade,
> That matter made for Poets on to play.

In those fifty years the institution of patronage had become obsolescent: for all the fictions and hyperboles of prefaces, it was no longer a profitable and safe arrangement but a free-enterprise market, where some few writers prospered and others, bankrupt upon "commodities," fed the muse upon publishers' scraps. In the literary world, as in others, the death of Prince Henry was thought of as a catastrophe, for he showed signs of uniting in himself the political beneficence of Leicester and the gracious oversight of Lucy, Countess of Bedford, whom Jonson called "the Life of the Muses day." Observing in general that Elizabethan patronage was "capricious and erratic," Edwin Haviland Miller, in his *The Professional Writer in Elizabethan England* (Harvard University Press [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders & Company Limited], 1959, pp. xiv, 282, $6.50), which is a well-documented successor to Phoebe Sheavyn's *Literary Profession in the Elizabethan Age* (1909), describes the emergence and recognition of the writing profession chiefly in the critical period of the 1590's, the expansion of the book-trade, and the reception of middle-class standards by popular propagandists and entertainers.

A central figure in any such discussion is Ben Jonson, who "every first day of the new year . . . had twenty pounds sent him from the Earl of Pembroke to buy books," enjoyed other favours from sundry noble benefactors, and was purveyor of masques to the Court, intermittently popular playright in the public theatres, and pensioner to two kings, though he had begun as one of Henslowe's hacks and ended in a cloud of poverty and neglect. Jonson's career, bearing in mind that he was a difficult and emotional man, a Churchill of the arts, illustrates perhaps more clearly than Mr. Miller recognizes, the ambiguous position of the man of letters in that age. An angry Puritan preaching at Paul's Cross once called him an illiterate bricklayer (a dismal slander), but he was as courtly an artist as only a self-made man can be, his gestures (as in *Cynthia's Revels*) over-elaborate and vulnerable, his learning explicit, the rituals of his comedies stiff with the properties of that antique *genre*. He had the insight to discern, with Hamlet, that he had two audiences, the judicious and the others, and he wrote for both (or, in anger, for himself and neither), creating therefore a whole spectrum of comic effects, forcing a serious, constantly experimental theatre upon the public, and teasing the sophisticated ear with topical hits and the cosy recognitions of revue. He has been much misunderstood and undervalued; Harry Levin once called him "the greatest unread English author." Mr. John J. Enck, in *Jonson and the Comic Truth* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957, pp. viii, 281, $5.00), emphasizes how each comedy by Jonson is a new start—and sometimes a new kind of failure—a new raid on the possibilities of the *genre*. The reader, following Mr. Enck dimly through the low smog of his style, can perceive how he properly sets aside the humours theory as the limiting principle of Jonson's comic vision, and muddles his way towards the larger definitions of comedy which the study of Jonson inspires. The comic problem is set by delusion and solved by the attainment of a politic self-knowledge; those capable of this are the comic heroes; the others, on whom they practice, are dupes, gulls, monsters. At this

pole, comedy shades into satire; at the other, where it assumes the colours of romance, and Jonson's hard mind only came as close to this as the "romance of realism," the chains of the delusion, which is a form of self-adulation, are struck off by love. The Puritan, as Jonson seemed to realize, is the enemy of comedy, because his self-knowledge is either indulgent or neurotic and in love he can experience only appetite or its rejection. (These definitions are mine, not Mr. Enck's, but I was led to formulate them in my efforts to understand his last chapter.)

Comedy belongs to the realm of *scientia*, the knowledge of natural particularities; hence the great comic writers tend to devise rhetorical structures out of technical materials (*The Alchemist*), social formulas (*The Way of the World*), or ideological positions (*Man and Superman*). The end of tragedy is *sapientia*, the wisdom which, as it is imaged in the tragic hero, consists in man's discovery of his capacity to apprehend and to be inhabited and transformed by the non-natural, by absolute law or ineffable mystery, this discovery being self-knowledge not politic and temporal but individual and final.

On the course of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century speculation concerning the nature of wisdom, considered in its development from classical and Christian sources, we now have Eugene F. Rice's invaluable work of summary and comment *The Renaissance Idea of Wisdom* (Harvard University Press [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders & Company Limited], 1959, pp. ix, 220, $6.25). Mr. Rice notes that two periods saw "rapid, crucial changes" in the idea of wisdom: in the age of the great Church Fathers, "wisdom was transformed from a pagan and naturally acquired virtue to an attribute of the Christian God" (or identified with the Second Person of the Trinity) and "a human participation" through grace in God's truth and goodness; in the Renaissance, the idea of wisdom was "gradually secularized" by "a conscious return to the antique," and conceived of as either "man's self formation to universal knowledge" or "his active commitment to virtue." The first, or Augustinian position is modified by Thomistic rationalism, restored by Nicholas of Cusa, coloured by neo-Platonic aestheticism in Ficino, and turned into the hammer of metaphysics by Luther. The second emerges in the speculations of the Florentine humanists Salutati and Bruni; wisdom as Promethean, "seizing the splendid torch of wisdom from the heavens," contemplative, a prerogative of the *élite*, is most fully celebrated by Carolus Bovillus; wisdom as moral virtue operative in the active life, the "proper right and privilege" of the man who has escaped tyranny of opinion, is the ideal of Pierre Charron.

This hasty survey of Mr. Rice's materials does little justice to the subtlety with which he separates the various strands in the eclectic humanist ideal of learning and piety. But it is a pity that in the examination of ideas as philosophically imprecise as these he has not attempted more literary reference. We have still to turn to E. R. Curtius for an adequate discussion of the *topos sapientia et fortitudo*, a ubiquitous literary convention which crosses several of his distinctions, and the neo-Stoicism of Charron might surely have been illustrated by reference to the appearance of the Stoic hero in Renaissance drama. For students of the English Renaissance, George

Chapman is in this context a representative figure. It seems to me that in his intellectual development Chapman moved from the ideal set forth by Bovillus, seeking wisdom in the esoteric and pious contemplation of the secrets of nature, to the ethical ideal of "Learning" (in *The Tears of Peace*), a concept of wisdom indistinguishable from Charron's, emblematically expressed on the title-page of *De la sagesse* (which is reproduced in this book). In Chapman, too, we have the Stoic sage and Pico's universal man as tragic heroes.

The wise man, said Cusanus, is a *res perfecta*, a work formed by "art" out of the matter of "nature." In every metaphysical or ethical treatise, every piece of literary criticism, and in almost every play, popular novel, and reflective lyric written in the Renaissance, these terms appear. However worn and often useless they may have been for philosophical definition, they worked beautifully in *sententiae*, in captions for such richly suggestive emblems of human experience as the Bower of Bliss or Perdita's garden—or, to return to where we began, the picture of Charles's court at Greenwich in 1632. (MILLAR MACLURE)

REVIEW

Democratic Socialism

Professor Cole's monumental study of socialism, *A History of Socialist Thought*, of which *Communism and Social Democracy, 1914–1931* (in two parts; London: Macmillan & Company Limited [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited], 1958, pp. x, 1–456; viii, 457–940, $12.00) is the fourth volume, begins with the French Revolution. He had hoped in a concluding fifth volume to bring his account up to 1945 or later, but his recent death means that these two parts of volume four are the last. The first two books in the series, *The Forerunners, 1789–1850* and *Marxism and Anarchism, 1850–1890*, are mainly studies in the history of socialist thought. But the third volume (also in two parts) on *The Second International, 1889–1914*, like the fourth, is largely an account of socialist movements throughout the world rather than an examination of socialist ideas. This may be partly explained by the fact that, with the partial exception of the Soviet Union, modern socialism has been more empirical than abstract. Democratic, like Marxian, socialists have apparently agreed with Lenin that it is "more pleasant and useful" to try to put their ideas into effect than to analyse them. Yet, despite the dearth of significant socialist theory from 1914 to 1931, it can be argued that the author might well have devoted more attention to what socialists believed and less to what they did. His discussion of the ideas of Lenin and Stalin is a welcome exception to the dominant emphasis on the development of radical movements. The uninformed reader of these last two volumes might be likely to conclude that socialists, like the followers of Mussolini and Hitler, think, if at all, with their blood.

A thousand pages to cover the seventeen years between the outbreak of the Great War and 1931 might seem to offer ample scope for a detailed analysis, but in fact do not. The author casts his net widely to cover salient events not only in Europe but in North and South America, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand. An outline of socialism in some two score countries exhibits the defects of most surveys. It results in a collection of rapid thumb-nail sketches, a résumé of dates and happenings with insufficient examination of motives and policies to make the *dramatis personae* come alive. Many readers would probably have preferred a more comprehensive treatment of fewer countries. Yet it is less captious and more profitable to assess the competence with which an author performs what he attempts than to quarrel with his choice of subject.

Professor Cole's account is understandably most valuable for the countries with which he is most familiar, although even the sections on Britain are more factual than analytical. In the Introduction he acknowledges the help of informants in many parts of the globe. Any book which undertakes to discuss socialism in four continents must necessarily rely in part on second-hand sources, but information thus gathered is occasionally inaccurate and often results in a mausoleum of dead bones without the vivifying touch of understanding that comes from personal knowledge. A people's ideas and institutions may be more significantly assessed by an outsider than by a native, as the studies of De Tocqueville and Bryce brilliantly demonstrate, but this goal can scarcely be achieved by an outsider who has not visited the countries he discusses. No one familiar, even at second hand, with the history of Australia and New Zealand, is likely to find much that is new in the thirteen pages divided between them, save the startling comment that prior to 1935 New Zealand was conspicuously backward in social legislation. Canadians can scarcely dissent from Professor Cole's judgment that "of Socialism in Canada during the period covered in this volume there is not much to say." Hence they should perhaps not cavil at his allotment of a page and a half in which to say it, although the United Farmers' movements and the brief career of the Progressives provide an important background for the development of the C.C.F. Unfortunately the Winnipeg strike is ascribed to 1920.

Democratic socialism, in the years between World War I and the onset of the Depression, was concerned, as Professor Cole amply illustrates, first with the contest with communism for the allegiance of the workers, and later with the struggle against fascism in Italy. Hitler's rise to power in Germany falls outside the period under review. Apart from the deference paid the slogan of working-class solidarity, socialists in most countries either showed little interest in international affairs or espoused a pacifism shading into isolationism.

The most interesting portions of this study are those which deal with the Russian Revolution and the subsequent failure of the attempt to turn the upheaval in the U.S.S.R. into world revolution. There may be few critics of Professor Cole's view that the Russian Revolution was the most important world event since the French Revolution, but his belief that it was "a great and glorious achievement," "one of the very few great and admirable events in world history," is more debatable. By sharpening the divergence between democratic and Marxian socialists, it forced left-wing supporters to choose between two very different political theories and to define what they considered true socialism involved. Many democratic socialists (including Cole himself) at first hoped that the dictatorial régime of the Soviet Union might prove a temporary phase destined to lay the foundation for a democratic classless society. Thus this volume is necessarily concerned in large part with the heart-searchings of socialists in many countries, and in the democracies with the splits in their ranks which long weakened the labour movement. During the years between the wars the battle between dictatorship and democracy was first clearly joined.

A doctrinaire socialist, albeit of the evolutionary persuasion, Professor

Cole gives a devotee's account, with few suggestions that there has ever been anything to be said for conservative views. He is in no doubt that the roads to socialism are the right roads for everyone, but his underlying liberalism is shown by his concomitant conviction that there is no one road which must be travelled by all. In his view any good society must allow wide freedom of choice and diversity of independent institutions. In this last, as in his earlier books, he remains an avowed Guild Socialist, with the liberalism as well as the impracticality implicit in such a position.

The liberalism becomes explicit in his criticism of the progressive destruction of such internal democracy as ever existed in the U.S.S.R., of the elimination of all potential critics of the ruling *élite*, of the subordination of the soviets and trade unions to the Communist Party, and of the growth of tremendous bureaucratic power, coupled with repudiation of both equality and liberty. All this took place, as he points out, not only during the struggle for survival immediately after the revolution, but most markedly in the years of consolidation when a more liberal policy might have been feasible. The much-vaunted "democratic centralism" has in practice meant authoritative rule by the Central Committee or by one man. He denies the Marxist assumptions that revolution is an end in itself, that classes are more significant than the individuals who compose them, and that motives of economic class interest (which E. F. M. Durbin dubbed "rational acquisitiveness") must always take precedence over all other interests. With most liberals of the utilitarian tradition he believes in the ultimate importance of the happiness of individual men and women.

No one familiar with Professor Cole's many writings would deny his ability, his capacity for hard work, or his gift for clear although seldom distinguished writing. But his reputation, like that of Harold Laski, would have stood higher had he written less. The sturdy volumes of his *History of Socialist Thought* will remain a valuable if somewhat pedestrian source of information on the development of left-wing movements in many lands; but in them the reader who seeks to understand people and causes will find more of the ashes than the fire of socialism. (ELISABETH WALLACE)